

# ***DOWNTOWN*** *Plan*

Madison, Wisconsin



November 2011

City of Madison

# Downtown Plan

November 2011

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## SETTING THE STAGE

Madison's downtown is unlike any other in the world. In his 1911 *Madison: A Model City*, renowned city planner John Nolen said, "Madison is one of the most striking examples that could be selected in the United States of a city which should have a distinct individuality, marked characteristics separating it from and in many respects elevating it above other cities. Its topography, its lake scenery, its early selection as the Capital and as the seat of the State University, its population, its history, such influential factors as these should surely have found expression in a city plan, a city development and a city life with the form and flavor unlike that of any other place." Indeed, on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this seminal document in shaping today's Downtown, these tenets still hold true.

Downtown serves as Madison's signature. It is the geographic, economic, and civic heart of the community. When people think of Madison, images of the Downtown and its unique isthmus setting often drive their impressions. It is the place where the community comes together, especially for the many events it hosts and the abundant activities it provides. Downtown belongs to all Madison residents and all have a stake in its future, because an active and healthy downtown is important in ensuring the vitality of the rest of the community and region.



*Downtown's iconic skyline view across Lake Monona*

The decisions we as a community make today will shape the Downtown of tomorrow. Previous planning efforts, including *Madison: A Model City (1911)*, *Downtown – Proposals for Central Madison (1970)*, and *Downtown 2000 (1989)*, have had profound positive impacts on shaping today's Downtown. All set lofty expectations for the future and all made significant recommendations that have been implemented.

Downtown Madison has experienced a renaissance in the twenty years since the last downtown planning effort. This plan will set the stage for that momentum to continue. It proposes a framework to continue to enhance the qualities that make Madison a world class city while effectively addressing the issues of today and anticipating the needs of the next two decades and beyond.

This plan is about getting the fundamentals right and having a clear vision for the future grounded in enduring principles that will assure a successful future. It is about making deliberate choices to achieve that vision, instead of isolated decisions without concern for the precedent they may set or consideration for the cumulative impact of incremental actions. This plan builds on a rich planning tradition to provide a dynamic framework for the next twenty years. As we mark the 100th anniversary of John Nolen's plan for Madison, this latest Downtown Plan will guide the future growth of our dynamic and engaging downtown, while sustaining the traditions, history, and vitality that will continue to make Madison, a Model City.



*Nolen's Madison: A Model City*

## Authentic Sense of Place

Ensuring that Downtown possesses an authentic sense of place-- one that builds on its unique qualities, reflects the values of the city's residents, and does not strive to replicate other communities-- is crucial in ensuring its long-term health. Sense of place refers to people's perceptions, attitudes, and emotions about a place. It is influenced by the natural and built environments and people's interactions with them. Successful downtowns are comfortable, but at the same time, exciting, fun, and places of continual discovery. Cities are ever evolving and, due largely to their compactness, such changes in downtowns are often more noticeable. It is a given that the Downtown of today will be different in twenty years. Successful downtowns



*A typical Downtown street scene*

spend considerable resources planning for and working towards a desired future. This includes proactively addressing those things that need improvement. It also includes identifying and building on the things that work well, while recognizing and seizing new opportunities that will keep Downtown fresh and dynamic. Downtown Madison today is much different than the city John Nolen knew, but the natural features that provide the unique setting that so enamored Nolen continue to be the cornerstones influencing its evolution.

## Physical Setting

Downtown's location on a narrow stretch of land between two lakes, coupled with its rolling topography, provide a dramatic natural setting. In *Madison: A Model City*, John Nolen stated, "No other city of the world, so far as I know, has such a unique situation on a series of lakes with an opportunity for so much and such direct relationship to beautiful water frontages. The physical situation certainly is distinctly individual."



*Downtown is located on a narrow isthmus, with Lake Mendota in the background and Lake Monona in the foreground*

The isthmus is approximately a half mile wide in the planning area and is flanked by Lakes Mendota and Monona. The aesthetic contribution the lakes provide as well as the recreational opportunities make them integral to Downtown's identity. The two lakes are quite different from one another and the way the Downtown engages them differs as well. The Downtown Core is closer to Lake Monona and presents a more urban edge of taller buildings toward the shore. The Lake Mendota frontage has a more residential, "softer" edge with significantly less public access.

The highest point on the Isthmus was chosen as the location for the State Capitol building. The Downtown was designed to

emphasize the prominence of this iconic civic structure, with panoramic views of it from multiple vantage points, both near and far. The topography generally slopes down from the Capitol to the lakes. Mansion Hill is located on a high ridge between the Capitol and Lake Mendota. Another prominent hill adjacent to the planning area was chosen for the University of Wisconsin's most important building, Bascom Hall.



## Downtown's Role

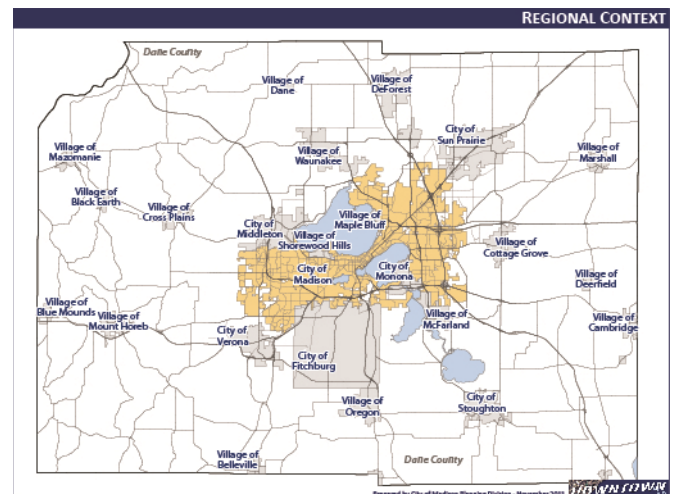
Downtown does not exist in isolation, but as an integral part of the State, region, city, and Isthmus. Madison is Wisconsin's capital city and the Capitol building, the University of Wisconsin, State museums, and numerous other places symbolic of the State are located Downtown. In this sense, many people from around the State feel a sense of pride and ownership in Madison's Downtown.

In addition to being the capital city, Madison is also the largest community in the region and Downtown is located right in the center. It represents the heart of the region where residents of Madison, its suburbs, and outlying communities have some connection to, and identify with. Whether it's living, working, or visiting one of the fine restaurants, shops, cultural or recreational venues, or attending one of the many events, Downtown is the place where residents of the greater Madison region come together.

On a more local scale, Downtown is also the center of the greater Isthmus area. Madison's near east and near west sides are home to great residential neighborhoods, important community institutions, bustling retail districts and other successful businesses. These near-Downtown areas benefit from their proximity to Downtown and contain much potential for future development. Fully integrating these areas with the Downtown planning area and ensuring that they are fully connected is an emphasis of this plan.



*Wisconsin's Capitol*



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## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – NINE KEYS

This plan articulates nine keys for ensuring the vision (see sidebar) for the future of Downtown is achieved. Each contains numerous objectives and recommendations that, when taken together, provide a comprehensive and strategic framework for the next twenty years. The framework includes bold long-term projects that can have highly visible and profound impacts on the Downtown of the future. It also includes smaller, less glamorous recommendations that may be easier to implement, but which cumulatively can also have profound positive impacts. Each of these keys is briefly described below along with a highlight of some of the most notable recommendations.

### **VISION**

*Downtown Madison will be a flourishing and visually exciting center for the arts, commerce, government and education. It will be a magnet for a diverse population working, living, visiting and enjoying an urban environment characterized by a sensitive blending of carefully preserved older structures, high-quality new construction, architectural gems, and engaging public spaces-- all working together and integrated with surrounding neighborhoods, parks and the transportation system to create a unique and sustainable environment for the community, the region and beyond.*

### **Key 1: Celebrate the Lakes**



The number one priority during the planning process was to embrace the lakes and to make them more integral to the Downtown. This plan lays out exciting concepts for reconnecting Downtown with its lakes. It proposes sweeping changes to Law Park and the Lake Monona shore that will transform it from a narrow strip of land separated from the Downtown by a highway to a signature park that is expanded in area, offers a variety of recreational opportunities, serves as a new community gathering place, and reconnects it into the fabric of Downtown. This Plan also greatly increases public access to Lake Mendota by forwarding a concept for a lakefront pedestrian/bicycle path that will ultimately connect James Madison Park with the UW Memorial Union and Picnic Point.

### **Key 2: Strengthen the Region's Economic Engine**



Attracting and retaining large and small employers, providing a thriving retail and service environment, and supporting activities that attract visitors and tourists are important components of Downtown's continued role as the region's economic center. This includes accommodating new growth opportunities within the Downtown. This plan sets the stage for a significant amount of new development, conservatively accommodating well over 4,000 to 5,000 new dwelling units and 4 to 5 million square feet of new commercial development over the next twenty years. This represents approximately 2 billion to 2 ½ billion dollars in new investment. Much of the anticipated development is in areas recommended for change over time with significantly increased density and a more engaging mix of uses.

### **Key 3: Ensure a Quality Urban Environment**



Preserving Downtown's unique identity and building on the qualities that make it special is critical in continuing to attract new jobs, residents and visitors. This plan seeks to enhance these qualities, and makes recommendations on preserving important views, setting expectations for integrating new development, enhancing the design of streets and public ways, and other elements.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*Madison's Comprehensive Plan includes the following a list of general "Desirable Downtown Characteristics" that served as guiding principles for the direction of this Downtown Plan.*

- *Very high-quality urban architecture, site design and urban design. All development should comply with the Comprehensive Plan, City-adopted detailed neighborhood development plans, special area plans and urban design guidelines for the Downtown area and its sub-districts.*
- *Buildings should be spaced close together and placed close to the street. Stepbacks are recommended when needed to provide additional space between the upper floors of taller buildings to prevent a "walled in" look, or to maintain adequate access to sunlight along public sidewalks.*
- *Very high-quality pedestrian, bicycle and streetscape amenities.*
- *Very high-quality public open spaces, including smaller squares and plazas maintained on private property.*
- *Emphasis on historic preservation and neighborhood conservation as defined in City-adopted neighborhood, special area, and other special plans, such as historic preservation plans, and/or City zoning regulations and historic and urban design guidelines.*
- *Land use intensity should decrease as distance from the Downtown center increases, establishing a transition between intensive urban uses and adjacent lower-intensity development.*
- *Compact, highly interconnected pattern of relatively short, intensively developed blocks.*
- *Emphasis on multi-modal travel, especially for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users.*

*(continued on the next page)*

## Key 4: Maintain Strong Neighborhoods and Districts



This plan seeks to enhance the variety of special neighborhoods, districts, and smaller nodes that, although unique places in their own rite, in aggregate truly make Downtown more than simply a sum of its parts.

## Key 5: Enhance Livability



Downtown is a great place to live. Since the adoption of Downtown 2000 (1990), Downtown has attracted a much more diverse population in age, income, and other characteristics. It grew by approximately nine percent between 1990 and 2010. This plan makes

recommendations to ensure that Downtown remains an attractive living environment by providing a diversity of living options and a safe environment. It includes recommendations for work force housing, low-and moderate-income households, students, seniors, special needs populations, and families with children.

## Key 6: Increase Transportation Choices



It is critical to have a Downtown that is easily accessible for employers, residents, and visitors. This plan makes recommendations for improvements to the Downtown transportation network and also provides a framework for a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation study that will

examine in detail future transportation options. It recommends enhancing inter-city connections, establishing two multi-modal transportation centers, extending East Campus Mall to connect to Monona Bay, creating a mid-block walkway paralleling Langdon Street, developing a new Downtown circulator, improving wayfinding, and exploring the conversion of some one-way streets to two-way.

## Key 7: Build on Historic Resources



One of the building blocks that helps frame a direction for Downtown's future is its historic buildings and districts. The plan includes recommendations for elevating these historic resources and making them a more prominent part of the Downtown environment through a more holistic approach that includes steps such as

enhancing historic districts' identities, considering new districts, providing preservation incentives, and addressing property maintenance.


### **Key 8: Expand Recreational, Cultural and Entertainment Offerings**



As Downtown continues to grow, it must continue to provide parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of its residents. This plan recommends enhancements to existing parks and the development of a new neighborhood park in the vicinity of Bassett and Dayton Streets. It recommends incorporating public art in public and private projects. An arts, culture and entertainment corridor is also proposed along State Street connecting the facilities near Capitol Square to facilities on the UW campus.

### **Key 9: Become a Model of Sustainability**



Downtowns are inherently the most sustainable part of a community. They usually have higher residential densities, more jobs in close proximity to workers, a wider variety of transportation options, and more goods, services, and activities that are integrated into the urban fabric. This plan recognizes the interrelationships among these and other “urban systems” and the objectives and recommendations in each theme area advance the goal of having Downtown become a leader in sustainability. The “” symbol indicates objectives and recommendations directly related to the sustainability goals of this plan.

#### ***GUIDING PRINCIPLES (continued)***

- *Well-served by arterial, collector and local streets.*
- *Excellent access to high frequency mass transit.*
- *Should be developed using Transit-Oriented Development standards.*
- *On street, structured and underground parking encouraged.*
- *Avoid large surface parking lots.*
- *24-hour regional activity center focal point.*
- *Mixed-use, multi-story buildings encouraged at locations defined in sub-districts*

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## ABOUT THIS PLAN

The purpose of this Plan is to describe the desired vision for the future of Downtown and provide recommendations for realizing that future. It establishes a decision making framework to ensure that incremental actions (such as budgeting and land use decisions) made over an extended time achieve aspirations for the future. This is a plan for the next twenty years, but it should be reviewed (and updated if necessary) periodically so that it remains an accurate and forward-looking statement of community ambitions as circumstances change.

Although it has been over twenty years since the last comprehensive Downtown Plan was prepared, much additional planning has occurred within the planning area, including several neighborhood, small area, and specific project plans. These plans are the result of many people and groups working together over many months. This Plan builds on these previous plans, but to the extent there are differences, it is intended that this new plan will take precedence and that any changes needed to reconcile inconsistencies be incorporated into the other plans and adopted as a supplement to the *Comprehensive Plan*. This is not the first plan for Downtown, nor will it be the last.

### Downtown Planning Area

Downtown Madison has traditionally been defined as the area between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona, bounded by Park, Regent, and Blair Streets, though there have always been relatively intensive development outside this boundary as well. It is not the intention of this document to draw a hard line on a map that defines “Downtown,” but its recommendations focus on the planning area described above. This is consistent with the framework set by the *Comprehensive Plan* and with the coverage of earlier downtown plans. The City’s *Comprehensive Plan* addresses many community- and region-wide issues in more detail, which allows this Downtown Plan to focus on issues specific to its planning area. This Downtown Plan recognizes that the entire central Isthmus is more urban in character than other parts of the community, and seeks to functionally and aesthetically weave areas adjacent to the Downtown into the fabric of the planning area. It should also be noted that each of the near Downtown areas have recently-adopted neighborhood or special area plans that are consistent with and reinforce the goals of this Downtown Plan.



*Madison's Downtown is very compact, as illustrated in this comparison of the planning area to the Badger Interchange on the city's east side. The red box represents one square mile.*



## Planning Process
























Prior to the kick off of the Downtown Plan’s planning process in 2008, the *Downtown Advisory Report* (2004) and *Comprehensive Plan* (2006) provided the general vision and initial direction for this present effort. Building on those documents, this planning process began by exploring “the possibilities” for the future of downtown. Multiple iterations of general approaches and concepts to achieve the desired future were created, analyzed, and refined. This was followed by the development of a comprehensive set of draft recommendations to implement the plan’s goals and objectives, released for comment in the fall of 2010. This full plan document refines these recommendations and presents the Downtown Plan to guide decisions for the next twenty years.



The process relied heavily on public participation from beginning to end. There were over 125 group meetings with property and business owners, neighborhood and community groups, City boards and Commissions, and many others with an interest in the future of Downtown, representing well over 2,250 individual personal contacts. In addition, there were countless smaller meetings and contacts with individuals. For a more complete description of the planning process, see Appendix B.



## DOWNTOWN PLAN MILESTONES

April 2008: <i>Kickoff</i>	June 2008: <i>Theme Workshops</i>	September 2008: <i>Downtown Plan Office Opens</i>	November 2008: <i>Public Meeting on General Approaches</i>	April 2009: <i>Public Meeting on Preliminary Concepts</i>	May 2009 - February 2010: <i>Refining Concepts</i>	March 2010 - September 2010: <i>Draft Recommendations</i>	October 2010 - September 2011: <i>Finalize Recommendations</i>
 <p><b>Comprehensive Plan</b> The Comprehensive Plan provides an overall vision and wide policy guidance.</p>  <p><b>Special Area Plans</b> Special Area Plans provide detailed land use, transportation, open space, and other recommendations upon Comprehensive Plan approval.</p>  <p><b>Downtown Plan</b> The Downtown Plan provides a detailed vision and policy for the downtown area.</p>	 <p><b>Open Space at Wisconsin Avenue</b></p>  <p><b>Better Maintenance in Historic Districts</b></p>  <p><b>Improve Parks &amp; Recreation</b></p>	  	  	  	  	  	  
<p>The planning process started with a review and affirmation of the Downtown Advisory Report as well as provisions of the City's 2006 Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>A series of public workshops were held on six planning themes, resulting in the identification of opportunities and issues for the Downtown Plan to address.</p>	<p>A Downtown Plan Public Information Office was established just off of State Street and the Capitol Square to allow for continued public interaction.</p>	<p>The development of basic approaches to each of the planning themes and the feedback received on them set a course for concept development.</p>	<p>Over 150 people provided valuable input on concepts regarding land use, building heights, open space improvements, transportation ideas, &amp; potential growth areas.</p>	<p>Continued discussions with neighborhood groups, volunteer professionals, City committees, City staff, &amp; others, provided significant feedback &amp; help set the plan's direction.</p>	<p>After thoroughly working through concepts, project staff continued to meet with agencies, policymakers, &amp; the public to develop a complete set of draft recommendations to achieve the plan goals.</p>	<p>Throughout 2011, Planning Staff met with residents, focus groups, policymakers, property &amp; business owners to finalize plan recommendations and produce a draft plan for review &amp; adoption.</p>

### Plan Format

The balance of this document covers a variety of topics, providing background information, objectives, and recommendations organized by the nine keys described in the preceding section. It should be noted that many of the topics covered are multifaceted and could have been addressed under several keys, but they are presented only under the one that best fit with the organization of this document. Beginning on page 109, an implementation matrix assigns a timeline and identifies parties responsible for ensuring that priority recommendations are carried out.

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## KEY 1: CELEBRATE THE LAKES

From the beginning of this planning process, the most frequent and consistent message from participants has been the need to make major enhancements to how Downtown embraces one of its greatest assets— the lakes. While the goal of fully engaging the lakes has been a part of the recurring community dialog for at least a century, it has become a high priority in recent years with a renewed sense of commitment.

This Plan includes three major recommendations for reconnecting Downtown to its lakes by:

- Beautifying the approach to Downtown along John Nolen Drive and the gateway entrance park near Broom Street.
- Transforming Law Park into a signature community gathering place on Lake Monona.
- Establishing a bicycle/pedestrian path along the Lake Mendota shoreline connecting James Madison Park to the UW Memorial Union and Picnic Point.

Although each of these is significant, together they will have a lasting and profound effect on the Downtown and city as a whole. The three lakefront proposals are described in greater detail below.

### Lake Monona

Downtown's Lake Monona frontage has been a subject of City plans for 100 years, when John Nolen first proposed his grand design. Subsequent plans also understood the dramatic potential of a more fully developed urban lakefront— one that could incorporate a signature Downtown park on the water and a grand entrance to the Downtown.



Downtown's Lake Monona shoreline

### **DOWNTOWN LAKEFRONT RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 1.1:*** Expand and enhance public access and recreational opportunities to and along the Downtown lakefronts.

***Recommendation 1:*** Transform Law Park to make it a signature park for the City, including limited filling to expand the shoreline, a boathouse or enclosed activity center reflecting the Frank Lloyd Wright design, safe pedestrian connections, sustainable practices, transient boat docking, fishing pier, festival grounds, boat rentals, and similar features.

***Recommendation 2:*** Improve the streetscape and public land along John Nolen Drive from Olin-Turville Park to Blair Street to make a more formally-designed, unified, connected and active urban lakefront and approach to Downtown, including the Broom Street Gateway.

***Recommendation 3:*** Complete a public path system along Lake Mendota connecting James Madison Park to the UW Memorial Union and Picnic Point, including enhancing connections to it through the redesign of the intersecting street ends.

***Recommendation 4:*** Create short-term docking facilities for boaters visiting the Downtown.

***Recommendation 5:*** Explore opportunities for Downtown residents to keep and dock boats nearer to their residence.

***Recommendation 6:*** Explore activating the Brittingham Beach and James Madison Park Beach areas through partnerships that may include rentals of small sailboats, canoes and kayaks and enhance them as destinations by establishing food vending and/or coffee shops.



Paddle and Portage canoe race

## John Nolen Drive Corridor

John Nolen Drive provides a dramatic approach to Madison's central city, offering sweeping views over Lake Monona to the Downtown skyline. John Nolen Drive is a major entrance to the Downtown, carrying 40,000 vehicles per day from the south connecting to the Beltline Highway and Interstate system. This corridor also accommodates a heavily-used bicycle and pedestrian lakefront path that runs along the entire southern edge of Downtown and links several key public spaces. The entire lakefront along this segment is publicly owned. However, the current condition of this corridor and the public spaces along it are not commensurate with such a prominent gateway corridor. Easy access to the lakeshore from Downtown is severely limited by John Nolen Drive and the parallel railroad corridor.



*John Nolen Drive corridor causeway*

This plan proposes a major beautification project from Olin-Turville Park to Blair Street. A cohesive streetscape design including landscaping, lighting, seating, and other elements is proposed to reflect its importance in the community as a major approach to Downtown. New overlooks along the causeway and lakefront path, stepped terraces to allow better access to the water, and planter walls incorporating public art adjacent to the railroad tracks highlight this initiative.



*John Nolen Drive Concept - causeway with lakefront path and overlook*



*John Nolen Drive Concept - near the Broom Street intersection*

## Law Park

This plan recommends transforming the portion of Law Park east of Monona Terrace into a signature city park and public gathering place. Law Park currently is a narrow strip of land between John Nolen Drive and the lake with a rip-rap shoreline, a bike path, B-cycle station, a small boat launch ramp, and surface parking lot. John Nolen Drive, railroad tracks, and steep topography in some areas make access difficult from most of Downtown. However, the exposure provided by John Nolen Drive and the highly-used Capital City Trail make this a highly-visible public space within the community and provides an unparalleled opportunity to develop a premier lakefront park. There have been several prior planning efforts for this area, including one that proposed a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed boathouse. In 1990, the City went as far as securing permits from the US Army Corps of Engineers to fill Lake Monona to the dock line to expand Law Park before this project was deferred to concentrate on the Monona Terrace project. A graphic in Appendix A summarizes the history of earlier planning efforts.

The proposal recommended in this plan is consistent with the 1990 proposal, but takes a fresh look at this park and draws inspiration from the best aspects of prior plans. The new plan includes a park shelter and potential visitor center based on Wright's boathouse design, expands the shoreline by adding approximately 1 ¾ acres of

fill, and provides short term boat docking for visitors. The concept integrates two land bridges which extend the park vertically and connect it back to the Downtown Core and First Settlement Neighborhood. The land bridges are proposed to be at least thirty feet in width and be designed as public spaces and not simply pedestrian overpasses. The design will accommodate amenities such as benches, pedestrian level lighting, public art, and plantings. The easternmost land bridge incorporates a large entry plaza along East Wilson Street between two new buildings on the City-owned water reservoir site. It also provides opportunities to incorporate public art, wind turbines and solar panels, and stormwater management features.



Law Park Concept - plan view



Law Park Concept – bird's eye view



Law Park Concept - looking west



Law Park Concept - view toward west land bridge



Law Park Concept - park shelter and east land bridge



Law Park Concept - on the west land bridge



*Law Park Concept - east land bridge connection to East Wilson Street through a terrace incorporated in a new development project*



*Law Park Concept - west land bridge*



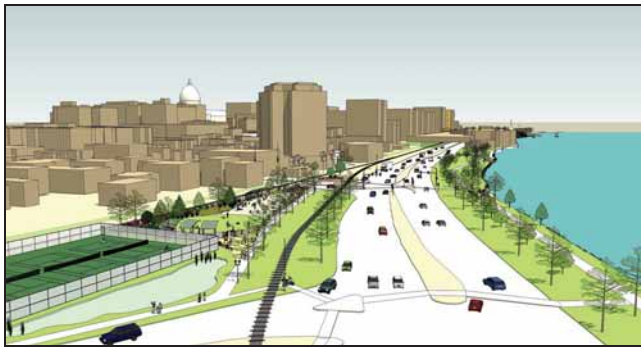
*Law Park Concept - west land bridge from above East Wilson Street*

## Broom Street Gateway

Entering Downtown across the John Nolen Drive causeway is a uniquely Madison experience. Madison’s skyline, with Monona Terrace in the foreground set behind the blue waters of Lake Monona, creates an inspiring scene. However, upon arriving Downtown from the causeway, there are few inspiring vistas that reflect an entrance into an exciting and vibrant Downtown. One opportunity to enhance this major gateway entrance lies within a City park, currently located at the intersections of John Nolen Drive, South Broom Street, and North Shore Drive. This parcel lies just north of an existing active railroad corridor that parallels John Nolen Drive. It currently contains a well-used off-leash dog park, tennis courts, and basketball courts. Although popular with neighborhood residents, the park looks and feels like a remnant parcel sandwiched between two railroad tracks with little thought given to its appearance or prominent location. This plan proposes a comprehensive redesign of this area as an appropriate gateway to Downtown with a reconfigured site plan and greatly enhanced landscaping, expanded use opportunities for Downtown residents and visitors, and enhanced connectivity to the lake and adjacent neighborhood. The centerpiece of this proposal is a reimagined dog park that incorporates artistic three dimensional elements and ornamental fencing. The makeover of this gateway park also provides opportunities to showcase sustainable design features such as uniquely designed wind turbines, solar panels, and integrated stormwater management facilities.



*Broom Street Gateway Concept - plan view*



*Broom Street Gateway Concept - looking east*



*Broom Street Gateway Concept - dog park looking west*



*Broom Street Gateway Concept - dog park*



*Broom Street Gateway Concept - walkway looking east*

### Brittingham Beach

The eastern portion of Brittingham Park has an unused shelter building and decommissioned swimming beach. This plan proposes rehabilitating the shelter and beach to establish the area as a destination and provide recreational opportunities for nearby residents and visitors. The protected waters of Monona Bay provide opportunities for an array of activities, such as rentals of small sailboats, canoes and kayaks, and a new fishing pier. The possibility of establishing a food vending service in the shelter should also be explored.



*Brittingham Beach Concept - plan view*



*Brittingham Beach Concept*



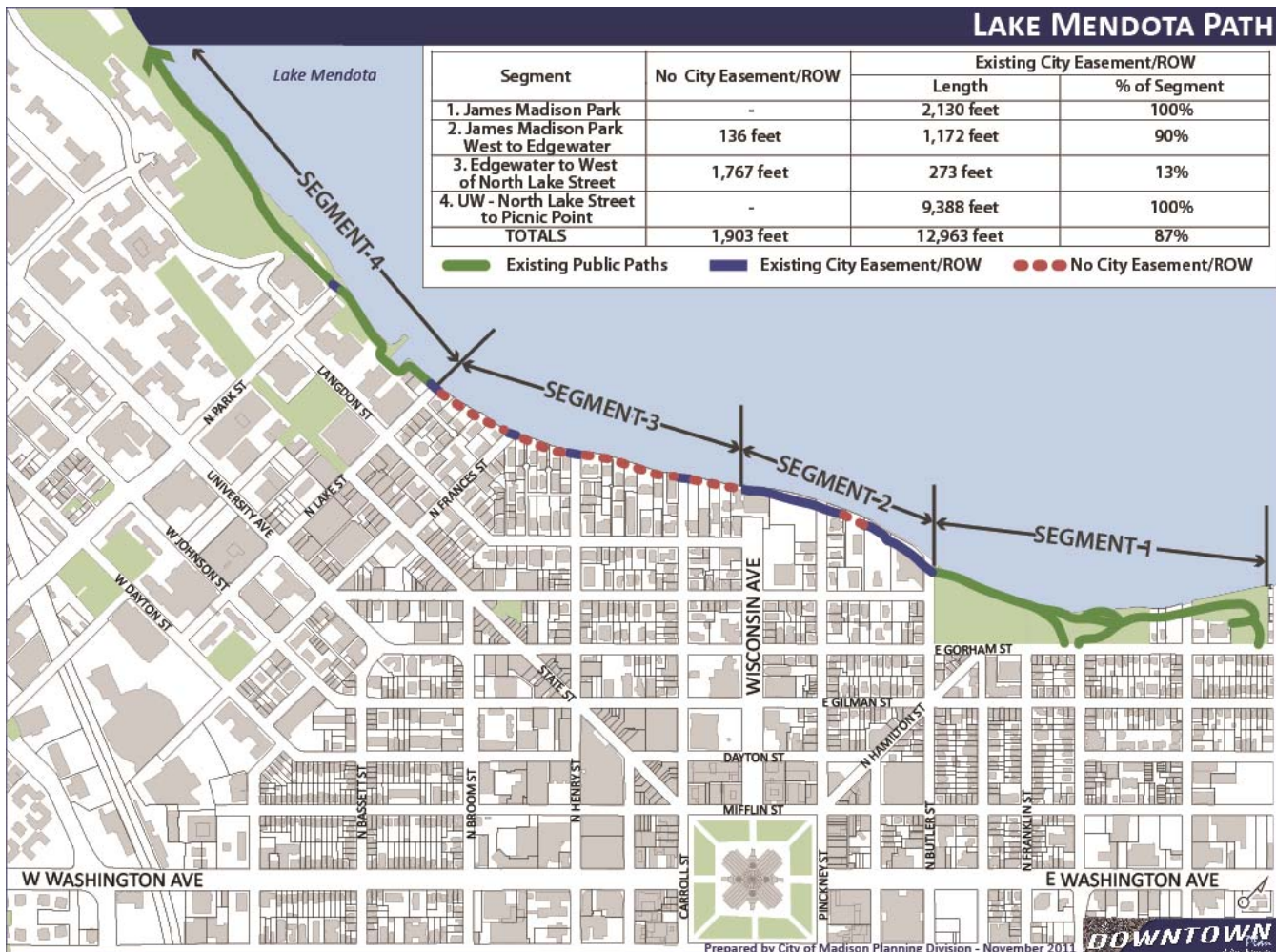
*Brittingham Beach Concept - updated shelter*

## Lake Mendota

Unlike the Lake Monona shoreline, much of the Lake Mendota frontage within the Downtown planning area is privately owned. James Madison Park and the ends of the six streets that terminate at the lake are the only segments of the shoreline currently in public ownership.

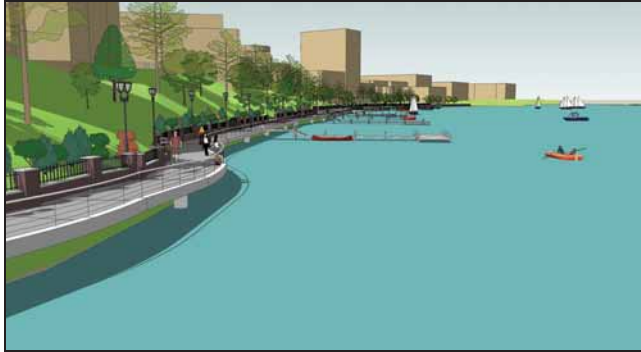
## Lake Mendota Path

Public access along Lake Mendota has been another long time goal of the City. This plan proposes completing a bicycle-pedestrian path along the Lake Mendota shoreline to connect the existing path segment in James Madison Park with the path on the UW campus leading to Picnic Point. The groundwork for a public lakefront path was laid decades ago, and the City has subsequently acquired many shoreline easements for the path. Although the most challenging pieces remain, the portions of the path on either side of the Downtown planning area have already been developed, and include the segment in James Madison Park and the segment on the UW campus from approximately the Memorial Union to Picnic Point. Considering the nearly three mile long path from Picnic Point through James Madison Park, the path is approximately 77% is complete. The unfinished segment-- between James Madison Park and Lake Street (approximately 3,350 feet)-- is the focus of this plan, and approximately 43% of this portion is already under public ownership or easement. Additional easements that will be acquired for a future sanitary sewer project along portions of the shoreline between Wisconsin Avenue and Lake Street may present new opportunities to obtain dual purpose easements.





This proposal envisions several different path profiles to respond to various shoreline and topographic conditions. It also includes redesigning the street ends to create access points to the path and opportunities to stop and view the lake. However, except for these street-end overlooks, the primary goal of this project is connectivity and the provision of a recreation trail along the lake-- and not to provide places to linger along the path adjacent to private property. Making the lakefront more accessible may deter some of the undesirable behavior that sometimes occurs due to its isolation, but as the plan evolves and the actual design of the path is prepared, particular attention will need to be paid to lighting, hours of operation, continued pier access for property owners, and other aspects to ensure security and enjoyment for both path users and residents of lakeside properties.



*Lake Mendota Path Concept – looking west*



*Lake Mendota Path Concept – looking west*



*Lake Mendota Path Concept – looking west*



*Lake Mendota Path Concept – looking east*

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## KEY 2: STRENGTHEN THE REGION'S ECONOMIC ENGINE

Madison's Downtown is the economic center of the city and region. Having a strong, economically viable, and growing Downtown benefits the entire community. In addition to the numerous recommendations throughout this plan that support an increased tax base, expanded business development, and opportunities for new quality, well-paying jobs within the Downtown, this section highlights more specific recommendations regarding employment, new development opportunities, a solid retail sector, an engaging Downtown environment, and an inviting destination for visitors and tourists.



State of Wisconsin office building

Downtown has always had a dynamic mix of private and public sector employers that provide both diversity and stability to the local economy. Public entities, particularly the State of Wisconsin, are critical to the future of Downtown primarily because of the stable employment base they provide-- one that has historically been more stable over the long term than other sectors that may be more dramatically influenced by swings in the economy. These uses are also important because of the support services and government-related legal and financial institutions that tend to cluster near the Capitol. The City needs to create strong partnerships to ensure that State government maintains a robust employment base centrally located in the Downtown.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) is a nationally and internationally recognized research university with approximately 40,000 students and over 18,000 faculty and staff. The UW campus is interlaced with Downtown's western edge. Madison College is a nationally recognized community college serving south-central Wisconsin with a Downtown campus one block off the Capitol Square.

Downtown has an important place in the City's overall economic development strategy which emphasizes basic sector employment growth. As stated in the *City of Madison 3-5 Year Strategic Economic Development Implementation Plan*, the basic sector (sometimes called the export sector) is the set of activities that generate wealth from beyond Madison. In most cases, basic sector jobs pay more, have more benefits, and have more promotional and human growth opportunities than the retail, food service and personal service jobs that dominate the non-basic sector. Economic development therefore seeks to grow the basic sector in a manner consistent with community values. A healthy and competitive basic sector stimulates non-basic development and drives the local tax base to support community development services. The inter-relationship between basic sector and non-basic sector activities is further described in the adjoining graphic:

- High paying basic sector jobs support growth of the retail and non-basic sector and provide more consumer choice and build the middle and upper segments of the local housing market.
- The basic and non-basic sectors create the property tax base that



sustains local government and the income to support desired social services.

- Adequate funding is a necessary component to quality public and social services.
- Economic prosperity and quality public and social services anchor the local quality of life.
- High quality of life enables Madison to retain and attract a quality workforce.
- More than any other factor, quality workforce is essential to sustaining quality basic sector job growth.<sup>1</sup>

The first priority for Downtown should be on retaining and expanding existing employers and growing local businesses. The businesses already in Downtown and willing to continue investing in the Downtown are also the best ambassadors when it comes to courting new businesses. The City should seek to address any real or perceived disadvantages that may be associated with Downtown so that it remains a priority location for business development. Leveraging Downtown's governmental and educational resources and forging partnerships with private sector businesses and investors will also enhance the potential to attract knowledge-based industries. With this wealth of resources, Madison and Downtown seem particularly well suited to attract such industries, including a range of high tech businesses.



*J.H. Findorff and Son, Inc. – a locally grown business*

Attracting new businesses to the Downtown is also important for it to continue to grow and evolve. Increased tax base, new jobs, and the creative energy associated with entrepreneurship and new development are just some of the benefits new businesses provide. Based on conservative estimates, the locations available for new employment and mixed-use development recommended in this plan will accommodate at least 4-5 million square feet of new commercial development during the next 20 years. Perhaps just as important, this plan recommends a deliberate approach to integrating commercial districts at the edge of the planning area into the fabric of Downtown. These edge districts include the Regent Street-South Campus area, Park Street Health Care Main Street, and the Capitol East District. These areas will generally have even greater available opportunities for large users looking to locate in a new building in the city's urban core.



*State Street offers a variety of unique shops and restaurants*

Downtown has experienced a residential renaissance over the last twenty years, and now work is needed to encourage and support the commercial renaissance that typically follows residential growth. This plan also recommends creating a more complete Downtown retail environment. Once the retail core of the community, Downtown has evolved into more of an entertainment-restaurant destination supported by specialty retail, with few general merchandise stores. The future of retailing in the Downtown needs to effectively mix the local businesses that make it unique with some of the national chains that can add stability to the retail base and provide an additional degree of familiarity that many shoppers like.

The evolving regional and global economy means that most businesses are less tied to a particular location. Madison must continue to strive to distinguish its Downtown as an attractive urban environment which provides a "complete package" of places to work, live, and recreate. Downtown needs to clearly establish and promote

<sup>1</sup> Building Quality of Life Through Strategic Economic Development - The City of Madison 3-5 Year Strategic Economic Development Implementation Plan. Ticknor and Associates. August 5, 2008. p.10-11.

its identity as an energetic and stimulating urban environment-- a place where employers and employees alike want to be.

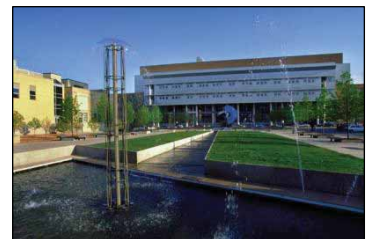
Working cooperatively with partners such as Downtown Madison, Inc., Madison’s Central Business Improvement District, the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau, the State of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin, and others, will be particularly important in successfully implementing the recommendations in this plan.

**Employment**

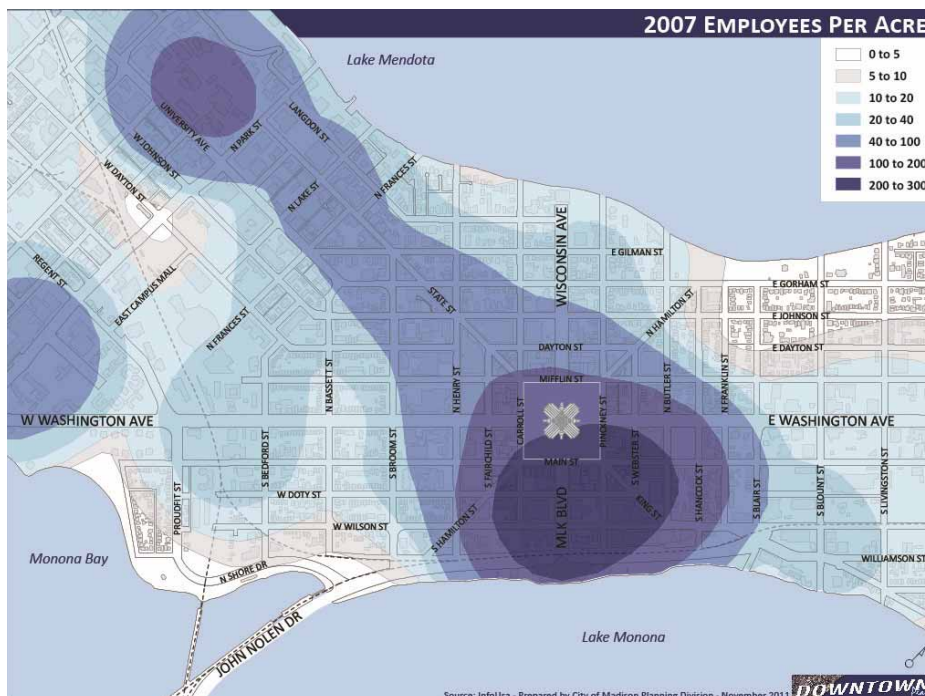
Significant employment growth has occurred elsewhere in the metropolitan area over the past thirty years, but Downtown is the core of the region's central city and remains its primary employment center. Downtown employs a large number of the region’s residents, many of whom work for the State or the University, but many more are employed in the private sector. This plan seeks to ensure that Downtown Madison remains the regional employment center by providing multiple locations for business development and ensuring that transportation systems and other infrastructure are in place to support future increases in economic activity and the number of workers.

It is especially important that Downtown remain a major center for State and University of Wisconsin education and research activities. Having these institutions Downtown in close proximity to one another will facilitate a synergy with education and research, and these organizations can take advantage of the economies of scale for shared and coordinated services.

In 2000, Downtown had approximately 33,000 employees working in a range of occupations as indicated in the table below. Areas adjacent to the planning area, including the UW-Madison campus, and the east isthmus (to the Yahara River) expand the effective employment base to over 62,000 employees. The map below illustrates the distribution of workers across this geography.



*University of Wisconsin Engineering campus*



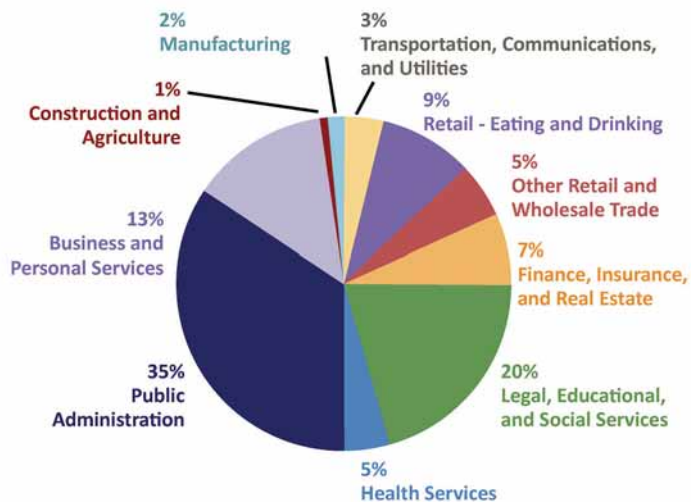
*Example of a German hackerspace where people with common interests, often in computers, technology, science, or digital or electronic arts can meet, socialize, and/or collaborate (Wikipedia)*

## DOWNTOWN WORKER OCCUPATIONS: 2000

DOWNTOWN WORKER OCCUPATIONS - 2000	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Office & Administrative Support	6,467	19.6%
Management	3,431	10.4%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	2,672	8.1%
Education, Training, & Library	2,573	7.8%
Business & Financial Operations Specialists	2,540	7.7%
Sales & Related	2,012	6.1%
Computer & Mathematical	1,979	6.0%
Legal	1,847	5.6%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	1,352	4.1%
Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians, & Support	1,319	4.0%
Other Occupations	6,803	20.5%
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>32,995</b>	

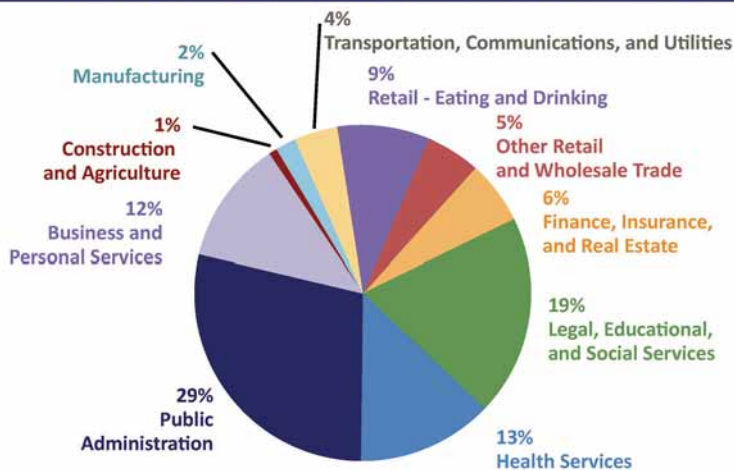
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY - DOWNTOWN 1999



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY - EXPANDED DOWNTOWN AREA 1999



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas

## EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 2.1:** Maintain Downtown as an important regional employment center by positioning it as a premier location for the formation and expansion of the basic sector businesses, including knowledge-based industries, that will retain and attract new Downtown jobs.

**Recommendation 7:** Work with the University of Wisconsin and other partners to maintain and strengthen the role of education and research as major drivers of downtown employment, including supporting the formation of business incubators and maker/hackerspace adjacent to the UW campus to encourage student and faculty entrepreneurship.

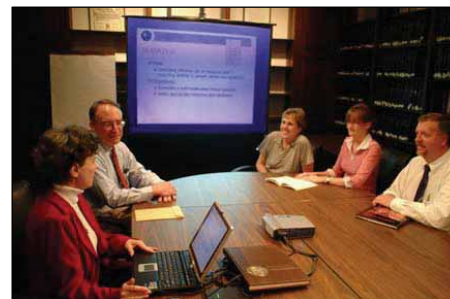
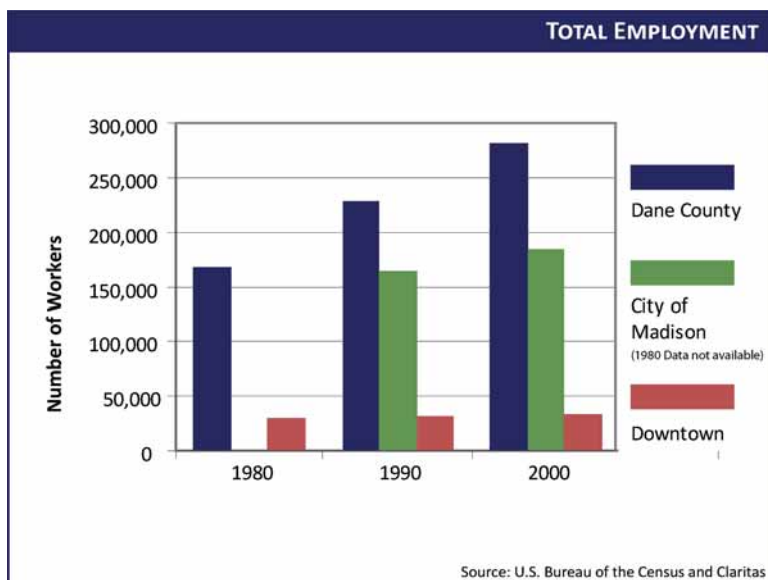
**Recommendation 8:** Work with the State of Wisconsin and other partners to maintain Downtown as the primary location for State government facilities and employment in the Madison area.

**Recommendation 9:** Promote Downtown business development by providing suitable sites and supporting infrastructure within the planned employment and mixed-use locations recommended in this Downtown Plan.

**Recommendation 10:** Provide suitable locations for the development of larger, taller office developments, including government offices and mixed use office developments.

**Recommendation 11:** Provide a wide range of office and commercial spaces to meet different business needs as recommended in this Downtown Plan. This could include, for example, attractive new and renovated class A, B, and C space, loft and flex buildings, live/work opportunities, and allowing some employment uses on the upper stories of mixed-use retail buildings.

**Recommendation 12:** Recognize parking availability as a constraint on Downtown business development and work to address parking needs as part of a multi-modal transportation approach.



*Downtown provides a mix of office spaces to accommodate a wide range of users*

### Downtown Edge Employment Centers

Like most downtowns, there is less emphasis today on the central business district as the region's primary shopping and working destination. Fortunately, downtown Madison has retained a strong employment base anchored by State government and the University of Wisconsin and has capitalized on its unique qualities to create a vibrant and engaging environment that continues to be attractive to many private employers. The maps on the following page show the dispersion of employment and activity centers during the last half century as Madison rapidly grew outward.

While Downtown currently has the capacity for business development that would provide thousands of additional jobs, there is also great potential for employment growth in areas adjacent to the edge of the Downtown planning area. Downtown edge districts with significant employment potential include the Capitol East District, the University of Wisconsin, the Regent Street – South Campus area, and the “Health Care Main Street” on Park Street. Although often considered a virtual part of Downtown, these areas retain their individual identities, and each have recently-completed plans to guide their future growth. The Capitol East District in particular has a large number of vacant or underutilized sites of significant size that can accommodate large footprint buildings. The Downtown edge employment districts offer some of the best opportunities for new facilities to accommodate large users which can be fully integrated with the core of the Downtown.

This plan recommends enhancing the physical connections and synergies between Downtown and the other employment centers at the Downtown edge. To enable all these areas to function together the transportation linkages between them need to be improved-- for transit, motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. This includes making these connections more engaging and easy to use. A network of specific transportation improvements should also be developed that will make travel among Downtown and its edge employment centers rapid and convenient. This might be one role of the “circulator” discussed on page 77.

Places where entrepreneurs, workers, potential investors, and others can meet to discuss ideas and explore possibilities are an important part of the Downtown business environment. This plan supports the development of gathering places and activity centers, such as small public spaces, restaurants, and similar venues, both within Downtown and between the Downtown and its edge employment centers to encourage this interaction and engagement.

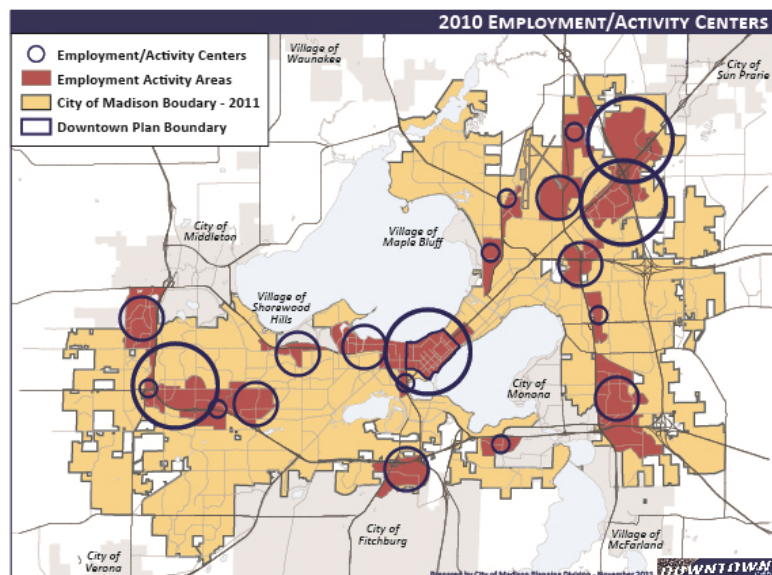
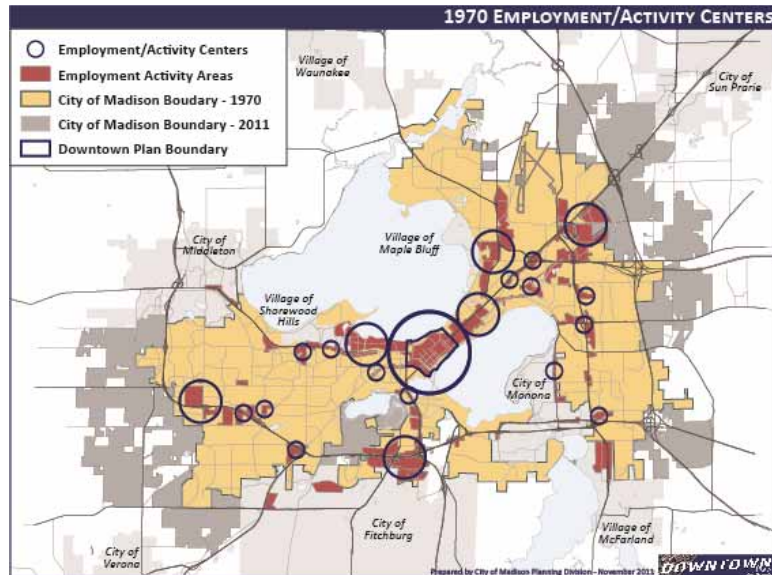
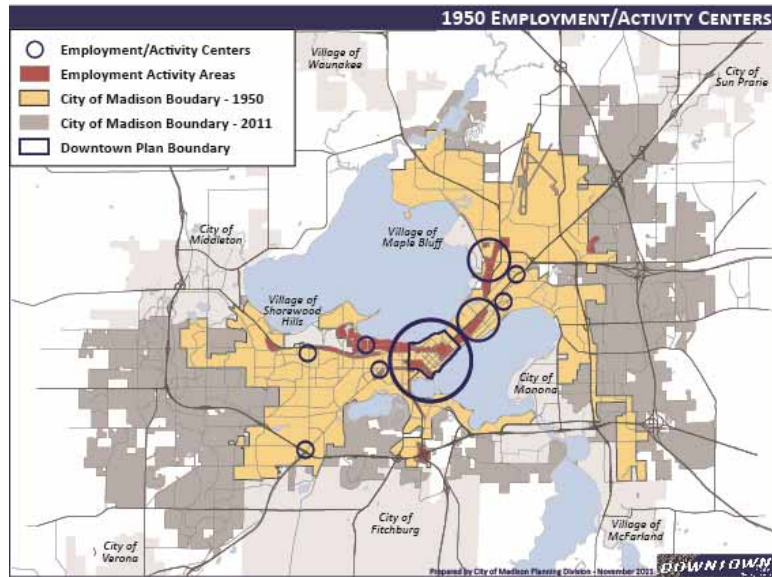
## DOWNTOWN EDGE EMPLOYMENT CENTERS RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 2.2:** Strengthen Downtown and create additional business development sites by enhancing connections and synergies with other existing and planned employment centers at the Downtown edge, including the Capitol East District, the University of Wisconsin, the Regent Street-South Campus area, and the “Health Care Main Street” along the Park Street corridor.

**Recommendation 13:** Improve transportation linkages between the Downtown and Downtown edge employment centers generally, including vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian connections.

**Recommendation 14:** Develop a system of specific transportation improvements that will facilitate the ability to circulate rapidly and conveniently among Downtown edge destinations.

**Recommendation 15:** Develop gathering places and community activity centers at locations within and between major employment concentrations to foster interaction and engagement among Downtown employers and employees, including small public open spaces, restaurants and similar venues.





## Room to Grow


Providing locations and opportunities for business and residential growth is essential to achieving many of the City's overall goals and implementing many of the recommendations in this plan. This growth is also critical for maintaining the vibrancy of Downtown and its neighborhoods. Downtown offers some of the best opportunities in the region for new development and private investment. Based on a conservative estimate, this plan's land use recommendations have identified infill and redevelopment areas to accommodate at least 4,000-5,000 net new residential units and 4-5 million square feet of net new commercial development (office, retail, etc.). The estimated value of this amount of development is in the range of 2 billion to 2.5 billion dollars.<sup>2</sup>

Downtown's desirability as a place to live and work continues to be strong, but development in built-up urban areas can be challenging and is often more difficult than developing on a "greenfield" site on the edge of the city. A concern often expressed during the planning process is that the development entitlement process for Downtown projects can be lengthy and unpredictable. True or not, this perception can be detrimental to attracting new development to the Downtown. Having a current plan that clearly articulates expectations and policies and reconciles sometimes competing objectives can clarify a path to achieving the overall vision. It can also help provide a basis for a more predictable and efficient development review process that reduces risk and increases confidence in Downtown's future direction.

This plan establishes a framework of recommended land uses and development intensities that can accommodate a significant amount of new employment, housing, and mixed-use development, and the plan should be used as a primary policy document when evaluating development proposals. Its goal is to provide a guide for new development potential in a proactive and deliberate way by outlining basic parameters for new development to provide additional predictability for property owners, developers, businesses, and residents. It is important that each proposed development be evaluated not as a stand-alone project, but on how well the project fits the context of both its immediate surroundings and that of the greater Downtown and the vision embodied in this plan. This plan should lead to a more clear and consistent approval process, but some flexibility to consider projects that are not consistent with the recommendations in this plan should be allowed to be able to accommodate appropriate projects not envisioned when this plan was developed. However, this should be a clear exception. To ensure that this plan remains relevant, it should be reviewed and updated, if necessary, at least every ten years.

<sup>2</sup> Potential new infill and redevelopment estimates are based on the sites shown on the Parcel Analysis Map for sites over one-half acre in size, with potential additional development on unidentified smaller sites across the Downtown factored in. The estimates are based on height and land uses recommended in this plan. Planning Division staff estimated new development potential and value based on projects built in similar areas during the last 15 years. The estimates do not include sites containing designated landmarks, identified potential landmarks, or contributing buildings in National Register Historic Districts.

## **ROOM TO GROW RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 2.3: Encourage higher density infill and redevelopment that is context-sensitive and complements and connects to the area in which it is proposed.*** 

***Recommendation 16: Direct development to locations recommended in this Plan for buildings of that height and scale.***

***Recommendation 17: Promote high quality architecture and craftsmanship for new buildings to reinforce the Downtown as an engaging and attractive employment location.***

***Recommendation 18: Work with the owners of properties with good redevelopment potential as identified on the Parcel Analysis Map to achieve the goals and objectives of this Plan.***

***Recommendation 19: Create zoning districts within the Zoning Ordinance that are designed to effectively and efficiently implement the recommendations of this Downtown Plan.***

***Recommendation 20: Allow existing buildings that are taller than the proposed height limits to be redeveloped at the same height provided the new building is of superior architectural design.***

***Recommendation 21: Aggressively pursue and support the redevelopment of 1960s era "zero lot line" residential buildings, and allow new buildings up to a maximum height of 5 stories, plus an additional story if the 6th story has significant setbacks on all sides.***

Downtown has experienced a significant amount of new growth and development over the last twenty years, and the changes this has produced should be celebrated. Major developments during this time include Block 89, the Dane County Courthouse, the Risser Justice Building, 44 on the Square, the Tommy Thompson State Office Building, the State Department of Administration Building, and the, among others. This plan allows that momentum to continue and anticipates on-going growth at similar rates.



*Block 89*



*Dane County Courthouse*



*Risser Justice Building*



*44 on the Square*



*State Department of Administration Building*



*Tommy Thompson State Office Building*

The map on the following page identifies sites that have a potential for redevelopment or infill projects during the 20-year planning horizon. It shows only those parcels, or combinations of adjacent parcels, of one-half acre or more with the following characteristics: surface parking lots, 1960's era zero lot line developments, underutilized sites and/or obsolete buildings, public parking ramps, and vacant land. Other factors were also considered such as building condition, architectural character, and land valuation. Sites of at least one-half acre are large enough to provide opportunities to maximize flexibility in design that will facilitate creative approaches. Smaller sites with redevelopment or infill potential were not included, but can be found throughout the Downtown. Successful redevelopment projects are often proposed for sites not necessarily recognized as having that potential beforehand, and this plan specifically recognizes that this is an acceptable occurrence. This is not an ultimate build-out plan for the Downtown, but a plan that will more than accommodate the growth expected during the next two decades. This plan should be revisited in approximately ten years, and revised with any new redevelopment opportunities that are identified at that time.





Examples of 1960s era zero-lot-line buildings

**JUDGE DOYLE SQUARE**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 2.4:** Coordinate the redevelopment of portions of Blocks 88 and 105 to create a vibrant mixed use project.

**Recommendation 22:** Pursue the development of Judge Doyle Square to incorporate public parking, active ground floor retail uses and streetscapes, a significant amount of private development and a bicycle station, among other components, while respecting the historic characteristics of the Madison Municipal Building and surrounding historic properties.

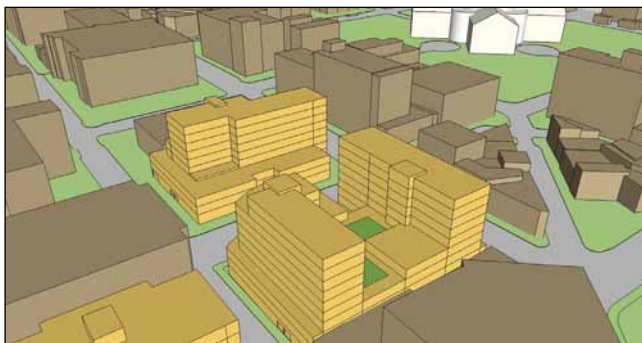
**Judge Doyle Square**

The southeast quadrant of the Downtown Core has experienced a great deal of new development in the past decade, and many opportunities still exist. Judge Doyle Square, a catalytic project, is currently being discussed and would continue this renaissance. It is centered on Block 88 (the Madison Municipal Building block) and Block 105 (the site of the 53 year old Government East parking ramp).

Development on Block 105 is envisioned to include ground floor retail uses with office and/or residential uses above. It is also expected to incorporate complementary transportation uses and intermodal connections, such as a bicycle station. New development on the Madison Municipal Building block (Block 88) could include a new hotel or office uses on the back portion of the block that now is occupied by a more recent addition to the Madison Municipal Building and a surface parking lot and restoration of the landmark

Municipal Building. A new underground parking facility with up to 1,400 stalls would be constructed under Block 105, the back portion of Block 88, and the section of South Pinckney Street between them. These projects are currently being evaluated as part of a larger transformation of the surrounding area. The image below, illustrating one potential massing concept, is provided for discussion purposes only.

Although the anticipated high speed passenger rail station planned for the State Department of Administration Building across East Wilson Street will not occur in the near term, this Downtown Plan preserves the potential for a commuter rail and inter-city rail station in that vicinity in the future. It remains a viable location for a transportation center that would allow for easy transfer among car, bike, and bus, and can be an important element of the overall Downtown transportation network.



Judge Doyle Square Concept - illustrative massing diagram

## Retail

Downtown offers a truly unique shopping experience. While many products and services can be purchased Downtown, however, it must continue to evolve as it welcomes more residents, workers, and visitors. Downtown residents have also expressed a desire for enhanced offerings to better meet their daily needs, such as more and larger grocery stores and general merchandise stores. Currently, it can be difficult for residents to find everything they need Downtown and many often must shop at one of the city's outlying regional retail locations.

A broader range of available goods, including those typically carried in larger stores, would also make Downtown an even more attractive destination for local and regional shoppers and visitors. The 2007 *Downtown Market Analysis*<sup>3</sup> includes the maps on the next page that illustrate Downtown's primary and secondary trade areas and regional drive times from Downtown. That study estimated that the primary trade area possesses retail spending potential of \$837.4 million and eating/drinking spending potential of \$150.2 million. It also estimated that the secondary trade area has retail spending potential of approximately \$1.9 billion and eating/drinking spending potential of \$230.7 million.



Shopping on State Street



Pinkus McBride Market



Tellus Mater, a locally-owned small business




One of Downtown's many outdoor cafes



A CVS pharmacy in The Depot, a new mixed-use development


## RETAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 2.5:** Enhance the attractiveness of Downtown shopping and entertainment to Downtown workers, residents and visitors.

**Recommendation 23:** Provide more convenient access to retail goods and services by creating and expanding retail nodes located near employment and residential use areas .

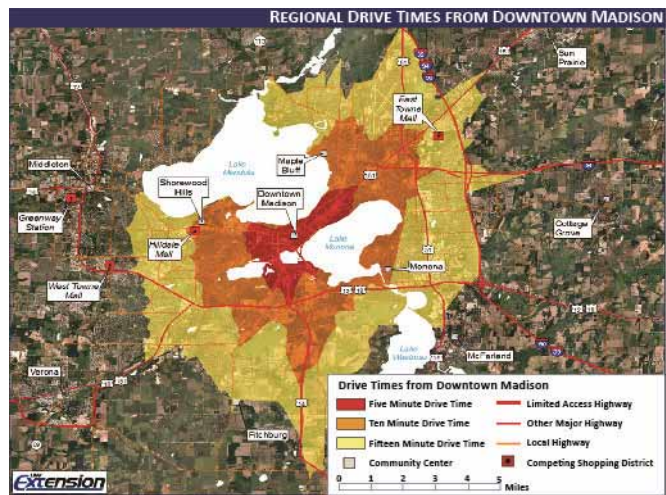
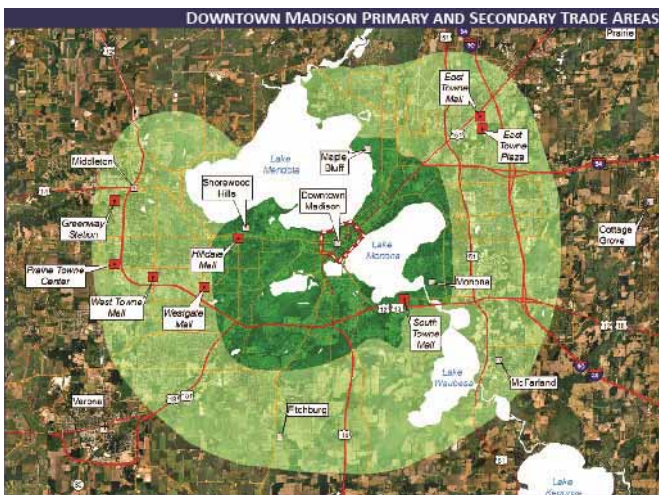
**Recommendation 24:** Identify and support development of locations potentially suitable for retail uses requiring relatively larger floor areas, and which could attract additional types of Downtown shopping opportunities.

**Recommendation 25:** Seek to fill retail "gaps" along defined primary retail streets, such as State Street, King Street and around the Capitol Square, where additional active uses, including restaurants, taverns and entertainment venues, can help create engaging pedestrian corridors.

**Recommendation 26:** Encourage development of small neighborhood-serving convenience uses at defined locations identified in this Downtown Plan. 

**Recommendation 27:** Create additional affordable short-term parking at suitable locations to support retail uses.

<sup>3</sup> *Downtown Madison Market Analysis, 2007*, created by the University of Wisconsin Extension in partnership with the Madison Central Business Improvement District, Downtown Madison, Inc., and the City of Madison.



While most Downtown residents already purchase many goods and services near where they live, opportunities for additional retail development exist (such as general department stores) and others will present themselves as the Downtown continues to grow and evolve. The Generalized Future Land Use Map (see page 40) identifies mixed-use areas where retail development is especially encouraged. It also identifies several limited neighborhood-serving commercial nodes near the centers of predominately residential areas to provide convenience shopping and services for neighborhood residents. It is conservatively estimated that at least 10,000 to 12,500 new residents can be accommodated in the new residential units provided for in this plan. An expanding range of available goods and services would, in turn, further enhance the attractiveness of living Downtown.

**VIBRANT, ENGAGING DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 2.6:** Create a vibrant, engaging Downtown business environment, where employers want to locate, workers want to work, and creativity and entrepreneurship are fostered and nurtured.

**Recommendation 28:** Improve transportation accessibility and make it easier for employees, customers, suppliers and others doing business to get to and move around within the Downtown.

**Recommendation 29:** Provide a range of suitable locations planned to meet the needs of many types of businesses, as shown in the Generalized Future Land Use Plan Map.

**Recommendation 30:** Increase the supply of attractive, affordable housing for Downtown workers.

**Recommendation 31:** Encourage development of additional retail, service and entertainment uses to support Downtown working and living.

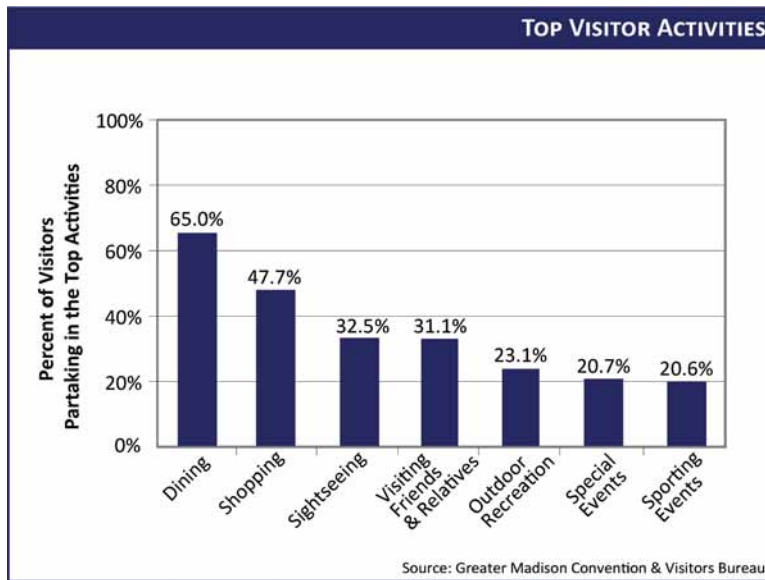
**Recommendation 32:** Maintain and expand locations for sidewalk cafes and street vendors.

**Vibrant, Engaging Downtown Environment**

Businesses deciding where to locate or expand look at many of the same things that people do when choosing where to live. Many employers and entrepreneurs, as well as employees, want to be in a place that is unique and authentic, one that is animated, diverse, interesting, active, and intellectually stimulating. This is particularly true for technology businesses. Skilled high-tech workers can often choose where they want to live, and the growing businesses that depend on them seek to locate in those places as well. Madison is nationally recognized as having a very high quality of life, and its vibrant Downtown is an essential contributor to that high quality. This plan contains many recommendations to ensure that Downtown continues to have a vibrant and engaging environment. It recommends suitable locations for businesses to develop and affordable housing appropriate for their employees, so that the potential for Downtown economic growth can be more fully realized. For downtown Madison to remain an important player in regional economic growth, the community must continue to work hard to improve all aspects of the Downtown that make it a desirable place for residents and businesses alike.

## Visitor and Tourist Destination

In 2010, visitors spent nearly \$1.2 billion in Dane County.<sup>4</sup> Activities, venues and events that annually attract millions of people to the Downtown are major drivers of this sector of the economy, and all Downtown businesses and services directly benefit from this thriving industry. Whether they come from other parts of the Madison community, elsewhere in the state, or from another state or country, the experiences these visitors have and impressions they take with them contribute to building a positive reputation of the Downtown and the city. Visitors come to Madison for a variety of purposes as shown in the table below.



## VISITOR AND TOURIST DESTINATION RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 2.7:** Continue to enhance and promote Downtown as a great visitor destination, including business travelers, recreation seekers, and casual tourists.

**Recommendation 33:** Work with the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau to attract more conferences and conventions to the Downtown.

**Recommendation 34:** Support the development of a new hotel in close proximity to the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center.

Of these activities, the following is a sampling of Downtown specific venues and events and their estimated annual attendance:

**SELECTED DOWNTOWN VENUES AND EVENTS ATTENDANCE**

Venues:	Annual Attendance:
UW Memorial Union	3,650,000
UW Kohl Center	1,000,000
Overture Center for the Arts	500,000
Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center	280,000
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art	180,000
Madison Children's Museum	130,000
Wisconsin State Capitol Tours	90,000
Events:	Annual Attendance:
Dane County Farmers' Market	500,000
Taste of Madison	250,000
Art Fair On (and Off) the Square	200,000
Concerts on the Square	140,000
Ford Ironman Triathlon	30,000
Maxwell Street Days Summer Sidewalk Sale	30,000
<b>Total Annual Attendance:</b>	<b>6,895,400</b>

Note: Numbers Reflect Estimated Total Attendance

<sup>4</sup> Source: Davidson-Peterson Associates, through the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau.

These numbers demonstrate that Madison is a very popular destination for visitors, but there is still potential to enhance and expand these opportunities. Research conducted by the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau identifies several improvements the community can make to become even more attractive to visitors. This plan addresses several of these, including: improved transportation and destination accessibility, a commitment to environmental stewardship, more Downtown lodging alternatives, increased lake and lakefront activity, increased emphasis on outdoor recreation, strong cultural tourism, creation of distinctive visitor districts, and the addition of iconic attractions.



*Art Fair on the Square*



*Concerts on the Square*



*UW Memorial Union Terrace*



*Farmers' Market*



*Madison Children's Museum*



*Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center*



## KEY 3: ENSURE A QUALITY URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Downtown Madison is a dynamic place that offers something for everyone. Its variety and mix of land uses offer an array of choices to live, shop, work and recreate provides the foundation for this diversity. This plan seeks to ensure that Downtown continues to evolve in a way that capitalizes on the vibrancy of these interactions, and makes recommendations for a complete and very high-quality urban setting that blends the built environment with the natural.

Maintaining Downtown’s strong “sense of place” requires understanding how people experience its built environment on several scales. For example, there is the broader citywide scale that considers things such as views of the skyline and the Capitol dome from vantage points outside of the Downtown. There is a Downtown scale that considers how all of the different areas of the Downtown relate to one another and all fit together. The neighborhood or district scale focuses more on individual subareas of the Downtown and is discussed more specifically under Key 4: Maintain Strong Neighborhoods and Districts. Then there is the more personal scale that deals with how individuals use spaces within the Downtown, and the design of elements such as parks and streetscapes. While many of the recommendations in this plan influence a “sense of place” on these various levels, this section of the plan provides a more specific framework for those recommendations.

### Views

The dramatic views of the Downtown skyline and the Capitol building, and the views to and across the lakes from Downtown vantage points, are among Madison’s most engaging attributes. To help enhance and preserve these views, this plan recommends establishing a set of standards addressing building characteristics such as height, setbacks, and stepbacks that will maintain a varied and interesting skyline as the Downtown grows, and protect and enhance visual connections to the lakes. The map on the next page identifies the key views, vistas, and viewsheds within the planning area that are most important to preserve and protect.



Lake Mendota skyline



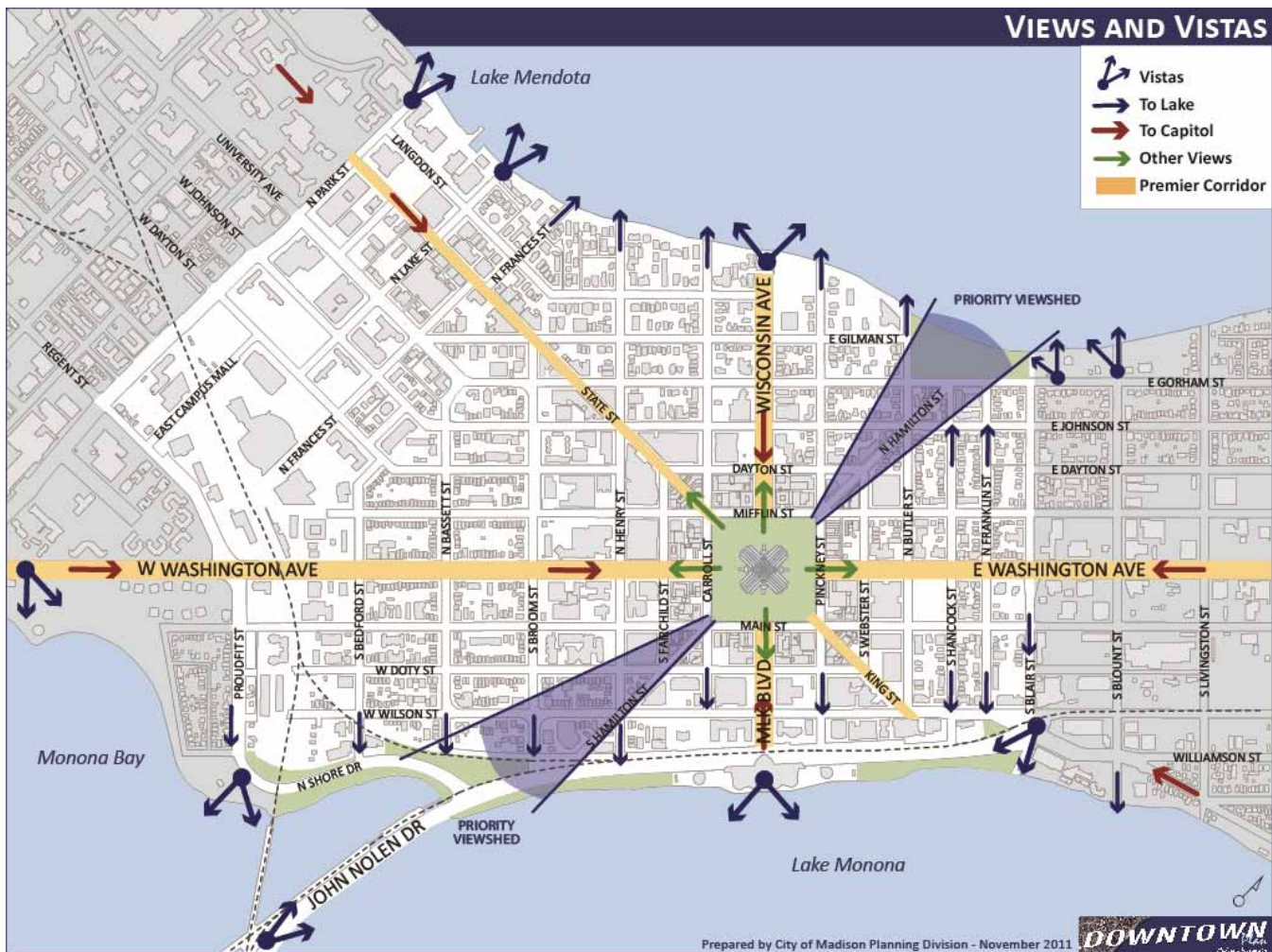
Lake Monona skyline

### **VIEWS RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 3.1:*** *Preserve views of, to, and from the Downtown that reflect the natural topography and enhance views of the skyline, Capitol, lakes, and other important vistas.*

***Recommendation 35:*** *Incorporate building height, setback and stepback requirements as provided for in this Plan into the Zoning Ordinance that will preserve and enhance the identified priority viewsheds and corridors.*

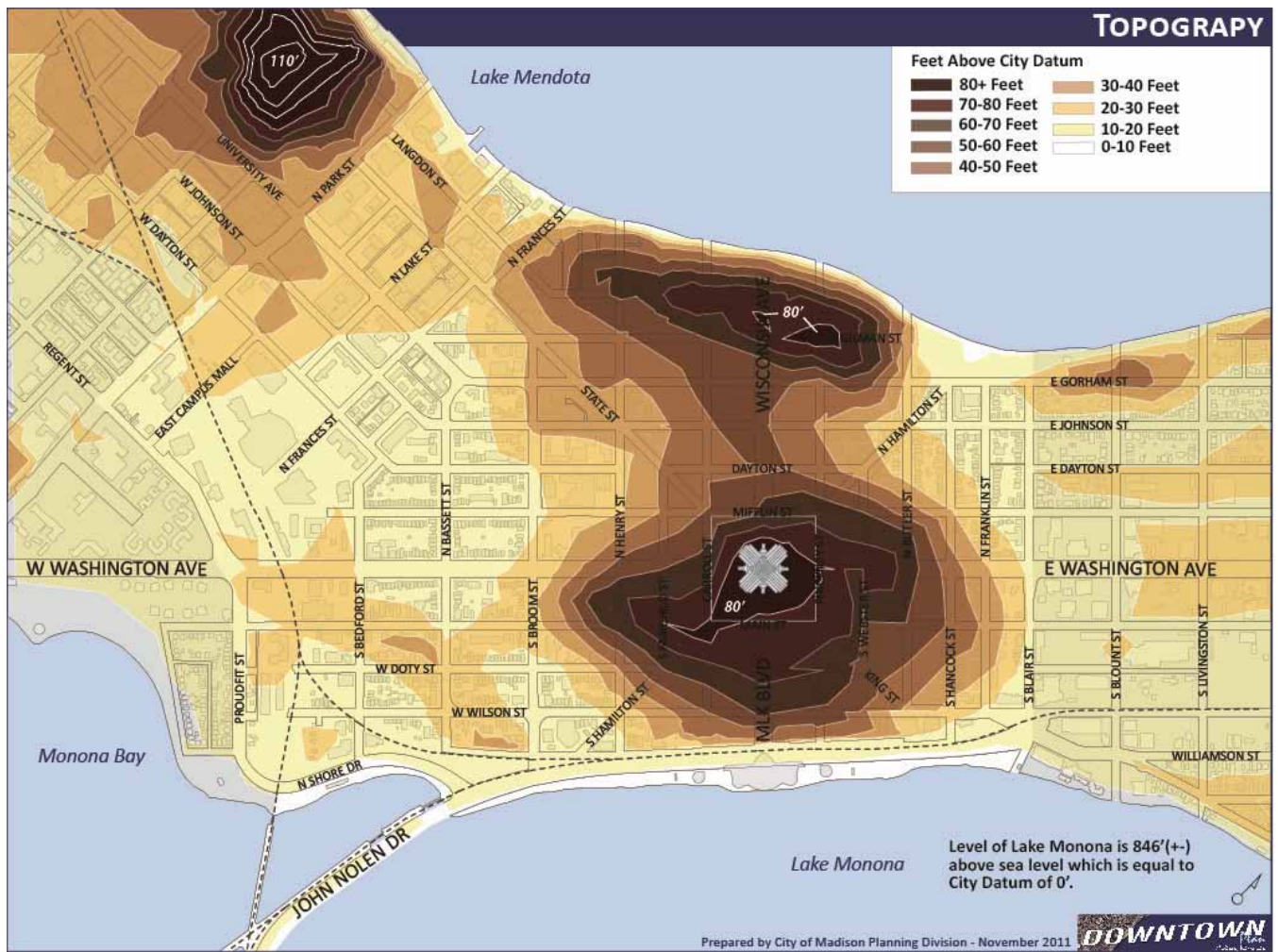
***Recommendation 36:*** *Establish building design standards that result in taller buildings having interesting and varied upper stories and tops.*



A city's skyline often serves as its signature-- an identifiable perspective that is unique to that community. That is true for Madison, where Downtown's location on a narrow isthmus between two lakes, coupled with an iconic Capitol building on its highest point, provides many opportunities for "postcard views" of the skyline. Preserving the many unique and engaging views afforded by the Downtown has long been a desire of the City, and preserving views of the Capitol has long been a desire of both the City and the State. The view of the Capitol dome from afar is generally protected by a State statute and City ordinance that limit the height of buildings within a one mile radius. In 1966, the City adopted the Capitol View Preservation Ordinance, followed by the State's enactment of the Capitol View Preservation Statute in 1990, both with the goal of protecting the long-range views of the Capitol dome.

The Downtown's topography also contributes to its interesting skyline and the availability of long views from various vantage points. As the following map shows, the Capitol building is perched atop the highest point in the Downtown, symbolizing its importance in the community. The Mansion Hill Neighborhood is located on another high point within the planning area. The City's *Comprehensive Plan* (adopted in 2006) includes a policy that states: "Establish building height standards for the Downtown/Isthmus area that will result in a skyline that reflects and emphasizes the natural topography, with taller buildings on the high ground and lower buildings toward the lakeshores."<sup>5</sup> However, over time new buildings constructed to the Capitol View Preservation limit have resulted in a "table topping" of the skyline that partly masks the underlying topography.

<sup>5</sup> City of Madison Comprehensive Plan. January, 2006. Volume II, page 2-44.

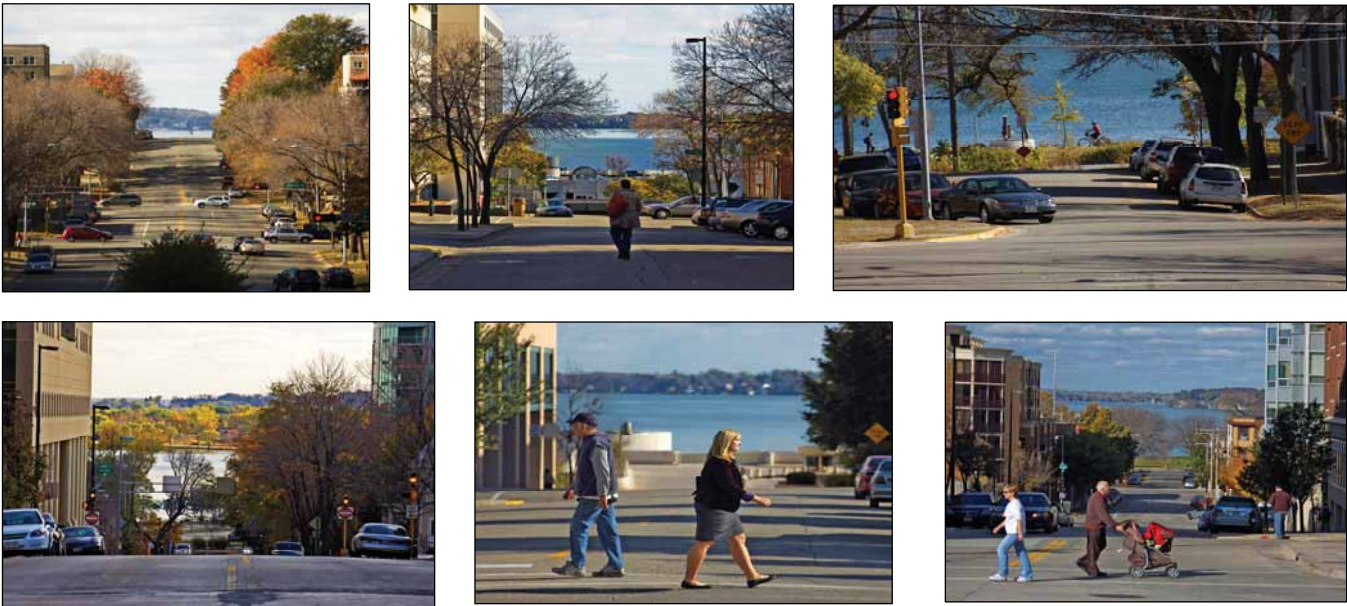


Key views, from both near and far, are important contributors to the character of the Downtown and once they are diminished or destroyed it is unlikely that they will ever be reclaimed. Eight major streets have views that terminate on the State Capitol and provide premier corridors for views to and from the Capitol. There are also wider viewsheds, generally down North and South Hamilton Streets, that are accentuated by a dramatic change in elevation and provide views to and from the Capitol, lakes, and far shorelines. Many of these views focus on a sequential experience-- that is not just views from isolated locations or prominent corridors. For example, the view of the Capitol when approaching Downtown on John Nolen Drive as it gradually becomes more dominant in the landscape is a favorite of many Madisonians and visitors to the city.



View sequence from John Nolen Drive causeway looking toward the Capitol

Many short views-- especially outward towards the lakes and back to the Capitol help orient a person on the Isthmus. As shown on the map on page 36, Downtown streets were laid out in a grid that had many streets terminating at or near the shoreline of one of the lakes. This provided numerous corridors offering views of a lake. While some of these corridors have subsequently been blocked by development, the intermittent glimpses of water provided by those that remain reinforce the uniqueness of Downtown's isthmus location. Although these have not always been preserved as well as they should have, this plan seeks to ensure that they are, or at least are not further eroded. The street pattern also provides view corridors down prominent civic avenues, such as East and West Washington Avenues, Wisconsin Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and State Street.



Examples of view corridors looking towards Lake Monona and Lake Mendota often include views to the opposite shoreline

**MIX OF LAND USES  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 3.2:** Provide a dynamic and flexible mix of land uses that provides ample opportunities for jobs, housing, retail, entertainment, and recreation in a compact urban environment.

**Recommendation 37:** Utilize this Downtown Plan to provide the overall framework for physical development Downtown.

**Recommendation 38:** Amend the Generalized Future Land Use Plan and the Downtown Sub-District descriptions within the Comprehensive Plan where necessary to reflect the recommendations of this Downtown Plan.

(continued on the next page)

**MIX OF LAND USES**

As in most cities, Madison’s downtown possesses the greatest variety and highest intensity of land uses in the metropolitan area. It offers great residential neighborhoods, vibrant commercial districts, lively entertainment and cultural venues, varied recreational opportunities, renowned educational institutions, and a high-quality employment setting. To ensure that these components continue to work together to benefit Downtown, it is important to consider and plan for how they relate to each other.

The Generalized Future Land Use Map on page 40 provides a general recommended land use arrangement within the Downtown. Although it is very broad, the map is useful in understanding the basic land use relationships among the different areas of the Downtown. This plan does not recommend the rigid separation of land uses, and the land use categories shown on the map are meant to emphasize the predominant use within an area, recognizing that most parts of the Downtown contain a mix of other land uses. The map should be considered a general guideline, with more detailed recommendations

about the desired mix of uses in a particular area, where they exist, found in the Key 4: Maintain Strong Neighborhoods and Districts section of this plan. Downtowns thrive on the fine grain mix and integration of activities that work together to create energy and vitality. A new Zoning Ordinance currently being developed by the City will include zoning districts specific to the Downtown that will provide more detailed standards for land use and development, as well as more specific definition of allowed uses.

The Generalized Future Land Use Map identifies two mixed-use neighborhood nodes within predominantly residential areas-- one in the Bassett Neighborhood and one in the James Madison Park Neighborhood. It is important to plan for these nodes because they are key components of the areas they serve.

## **MIX OF LAND USES**


### **RECOMMENDATIONS** *(continued)*

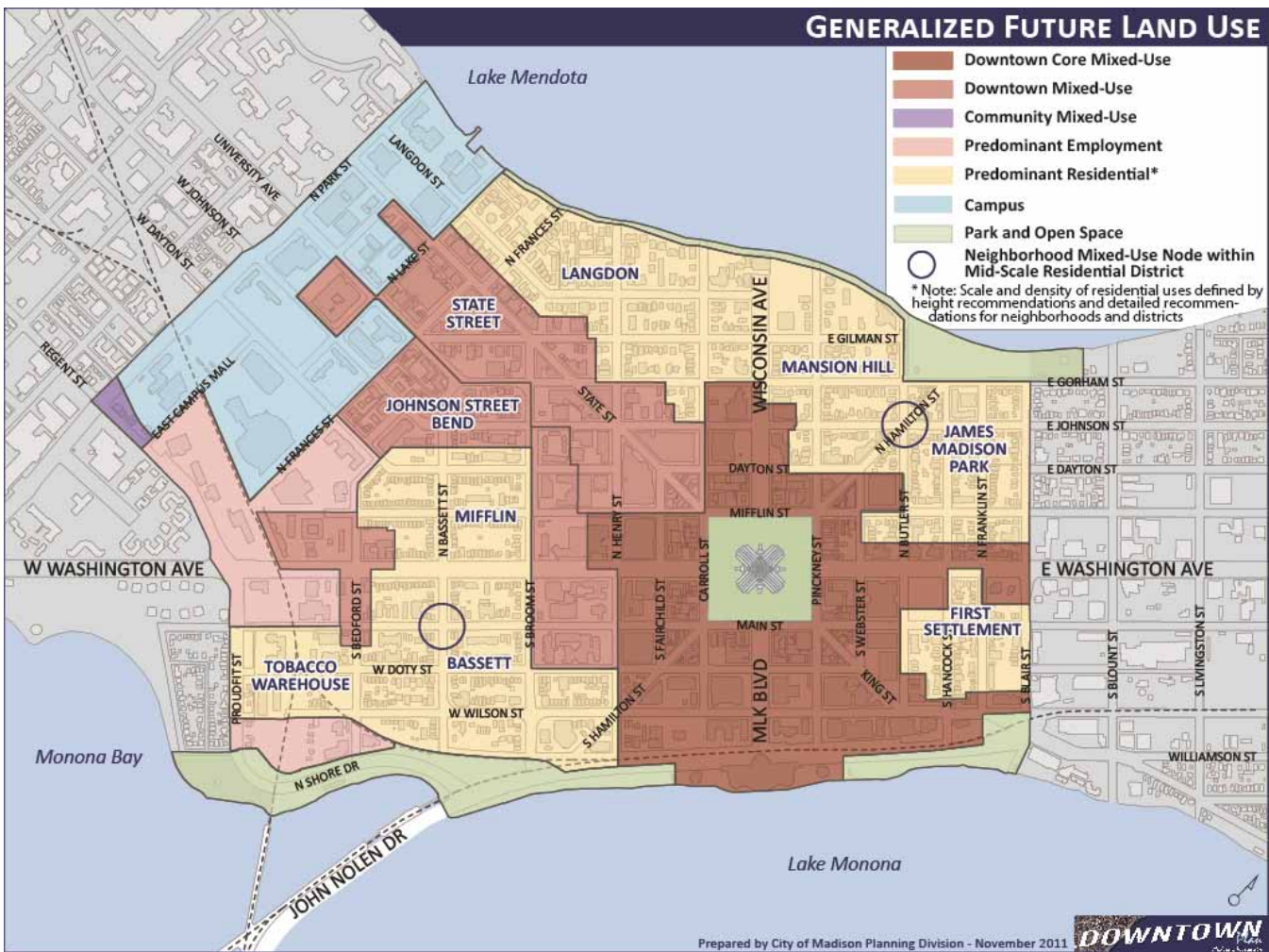
***Recommendation 39:*** Amend adopted neighborhood plans where necessary to be consistent with and reflect the recommendations of this Downtown Plan.

***Recommendation 40:*** Develop Downtown specific zoning districts in the Zoning Ordinance to implement the land use and design recommendations contained in this plan.

***Recommendation 41:*** Concentrate ground floor commercial uses at mixed-use neighborhood nodes identified in this Downtown Plan, rather than dispersing them throughout the area.

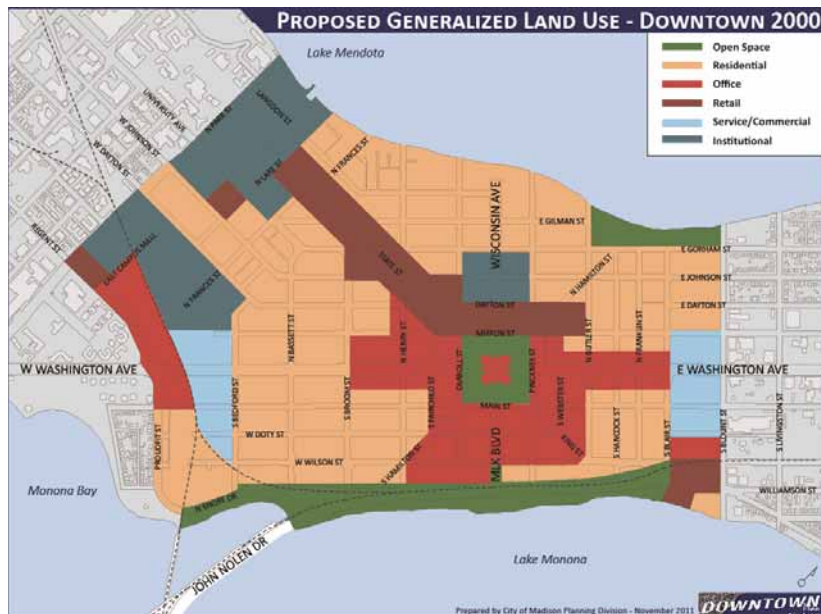
***Recommendation 42:*** Provide enhanced streetscape amenities at neighborhood nodes, such as curb bump outs at intersections, wider sidewalks, benches, bike racks, enhanced terrace treatments, and more landscaping.

***Recommendation 43:*** Seek to implement transit-oriented development principles in locations near existing and proposed transit stops. 



The Proposed Generalized Land Use Map to the right is from the *Downtown 2000* plan that was adopted by the City in 1989 and is included in this document for historical purposes only. Note that while there are some changes, the overall land use organization is very similar to that proposed in the map above.

Although it is imbedded across all areas of this plan, land use is the cornerstone of the major plan goal of making Downtown a model of sustainability (see page 105). In addition to generally supporting a mix of uses and relatively higher density, this plan specifically supports the principles of Transit Oriented Development, or TOD. TODs are essentially higher-density mixed-use development areas that are less automobile-centered and are coordinated with, and developed in close proximity to, existing and planned transit centers. The Downtown Core, State Street, and West Rail districts in particular embody many TOD principles.



## BUILDING SCALE

Buildings frame the private and public spaces in which people experience the Downtown, and the relationships among buildings and how they interface with the street are key determinants in defining the character of a block, street, or neighborhood, and collectively, of the Downtown. Having a scale of buildings that is compatible with its surroundings leads to a built environment with a true sense of place. The building envelope defined by the allowable building height, setbacks, and stepbacks provides the basis for appropriate building scale across the planning area.

### Building Heights

Allowable building height for new development is a frequent source of contention in Downtown redevelopment and infill projects, and can be a factor in longer and less predictable development review processes when structures are proposed that are taller than others in their immediate vicinity. The appropriate height for new buildings is influenced by numerous factors. Topography, important view corridors and viewsheds, the presence of historic buildings, the use and scale recommendations for an area, and the existing scale of buildings in the vicinity are among the factors considered. Developing a physical scale model of the Downtown can help in this evaluation.

The map on the next page recommends a pattern of maximum building heights that reflects these considerations and the land use and other recommendations contained in this plan. Parts of the Downtown have had maximum building heights for years through requirements of the C-4 Zoning District and Downtown Design Zones. In these areas, establishing absolute building heights has clarified expectations for new development and contributed to a more consistent and predictable development review process. The proposed height limitations are not intended to perpetuate the status quo, or unreasonably restrict redevelopment potential. The proposed height limits are significantly higher than most existing development in most parts of the Downtown, and in fact, almost all of the development that occurred in the Downtown over the past twenty years would be allowed under the proposed height map.

The Maximum Building Heights Map illustrates the maximum height of the tallest building within each colored area, and does illustrate more subtle height limits that may result from the protection of specific view corridors, building street setbacks, upper story building stepbacks, desired variety in building heights, landmark or historic district designation, or buildings in the Mansion Hill Historic District that are limited to 50 feet in height. The map should not be interpreted as promoting the redevelopment of existing landmark buildings of less than the maximum allowed height. However, out-of-context sites with building types recommended for redevelopment (see page 29) should be allowed to be redeveloped at taller heights than may be indicated on the map.

For the purposes of this plan, the Maximum Building Heights Map is intended to reflect recommended building heights based on typical story heights (floor-to-floor) of 14-18 feet for the first story, and 10-14 feet for upper stories. This should not be construed to allow additional stories for buildings with lower floor-to-floor heights,

## **BUILDING SCALE RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 3.3:*** Provide a framework for building scale that reflects the existing or planned character of the area in which a site is located and considers the larger Downtown context.

***Recommendation 44:*** Establish maximum building heights as shown on the Maximum Building Heights Map and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance to provide variety and reflect and enhance the varied topography of the Downtown.

***Recommendation 45:*** Establish building setback and/or build-to line requirements in the Zoning Ordinance that reflect the character of the areas in which the property is located. As a general rule, buildings in residential areas should be set back between 8 and 18 feet from the front property line, and buildings in mixed-use or non-residential areas should be set back between 0 and 10 feet from the front property line.

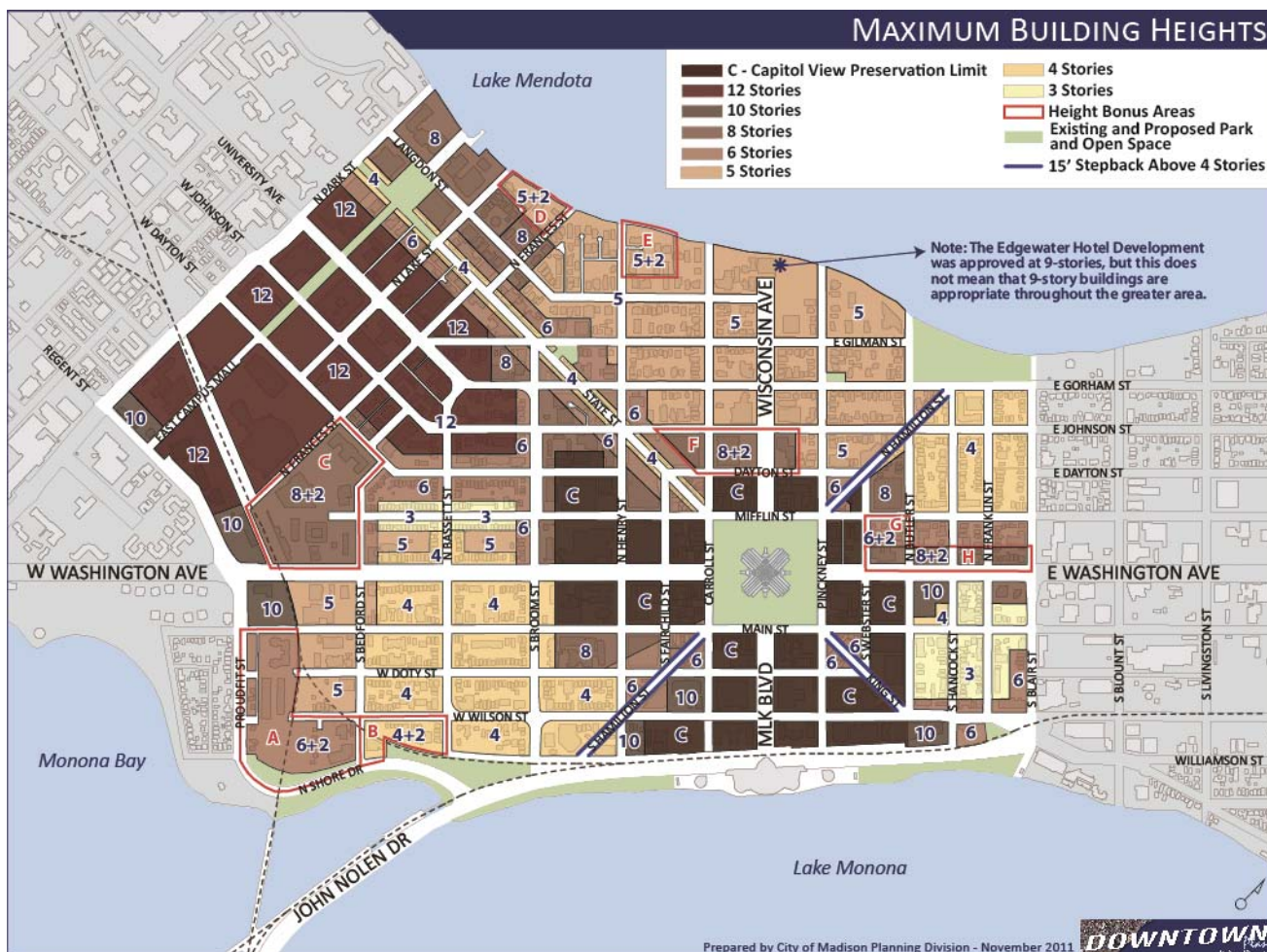
***Recommendation 46:*** Establish building stepback requirements in the Zoning Ordinance that reflect the character of the areas in which the property is located. As a general rule, a stepback should be considered for street facades after the third or fourth story for buildings taller than five stories.

***Recommendation 47:*** The City should commission the construction of a physical, scale model of the Downtown to assist in evaluating development proposals.

and buildings with taller floor-to-floor heights should reduce the number of stories accordingly. Also for the purposes of this plan, height is measured from the highest point of a front lot line along a street adjacent to the site, so buildings on the downhill side of a slope might be taller than shown on the low portions of the site.

Rooftops can provide valuable open spaces, such as gardens or patios, in dense urban environments. This Downtown Plan encourages the development of such amenities, including potential amendments to the Capitol View Preservation Ordinance, that may allow the minimum required stair/elevator access to such spaces as an exception to that limit.

During the planning process, several areas were identified with special characteristics that make it reasonable to allow the potential to consider buildings slightly taller than the recommended base height under certain circumstances. These tend to be transition areas located between areas with different development character, recommended building height and scale; or which include existing older structures whose long-term preservation should be encouraged, but may be threatened by the potential for high-density redevelopment. To recognize and accommodate these situations, the Maximum Building Heights Map in this Downtown Plan defines eight areas where buildings may be allowed up to two additional, or bonus, stories if they meet specific criteria that reflect the unique context of the site and its surroundings, and help to advance the planning recommendations for that area. Further explanation on the bonus stories and the criteria for considering them can be found in Appendix C.





## Building Setbacks and Stepbacks

The *Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Madison* applicable to the current C4 zoning district already establish upper story building stepbacks along State Street (as do the applicable requirements in Downtown Design Zone 1) and on the triangle blocks at the corners of Capitol Square. It is recommended that setback and stepback standards be established for selected additional streets in the new Zoning Ordinance as required to preserve key viewsheds, including views to the lakes and to the Capitol; to maintain a sense of openness and access to sunlight along relatively-narrow streets with tall allowed building heights---especially pedestrian-oriented streets with buildings close to the sidewalk; and to help smooth the visual transition between areas with very different allowed building height and scale.



*The Madison Mark incorporates stepbacks above the third story*

The thoughtful utilization of building setbacks and upper-story stepbacks can also be effective approaches to ensuring that the scale of new buildings is compatible with its context. While not necessary throughout the Downtown, such measures are appropriate along certain street frontages and will be mapped as part of the Downtown zoning districts.

Buildings on diagonal streets radiating out from Capitol Square should observe a minimum stepback of fifteen feet above the fourth story. This will maintain a building face-to-building face measurement for upper floors that reflects the distance between the corners of the buildings on the Square at the intersection of these streets.

## STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Downtown was laid out with streets radiating from Capitol Square. Four of those streets – East and West Washington Avenues, Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard, and Wisconsin Avenue -- have rights-of-way that are twice the width of most other streets (132' vs. 66') to reflect their prominence. East and West Washington Avenues provide primary approaches to the Capitol, and Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue are on an axis that connects the Capitol to the two lakes. East Washington Avenue recently underwent an \$85 million-plus reconstruction, and aesthetic improvements were made up to Blair Street, but the design was not continued the final five blocks to the Capitol Square. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard was also reconstructed with a design that reflects its role as a civic connection between the Capitol and Monona Terrace.

People are attracted to great downtowns, and a major part of their experience has to do with the “people places” that a downtown offers. Many of these destinations are discussed in other sections of this plan. However, creating an attractive, safe, and engaging downtown pedestrian realm-- the streets, sidewalks, pathways, and other corridors that connect these destinations and encourage people

### **STREETSCAPE DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 3.4:*** Continue a comprehensive “complete streets” streetscape design approach for Downtown streets to reflect their place in the community and ensure that they are beautiful, interesting, engaging, safe, and comfortable public spaces.

***Recommendation 48:*** Enhance the special character of West Washington Avenue, including the preservation of wide terraces with mature canopy trees.

***Recommendation 49:*** Continue the East Washington Avenue streetscape enhancements from Blair Street to Capitol Square.

***Recommendation 50:*** Enhance the Wisconsin Avenue streetscape through improvements such as ornamental area and pedestrian lighting, landscaping, and other amenities while maintaining the wide terraces.

***Recommendation 51:*** Create a palette of streetscape amenities to reflect the Streetscape Design Map for Downtown streets.

to walk is just as important. A streetscape consists of street paving and marking, terrace design, trees and landscaping, sidewalks, street furniture, and lighting that combine to form an overall aesthetic and identity for a place. Downtown streets differ significantly in the number of traffic lanes, speed limit, street width, transit usage, level of pedestrian activity, bicycle usage, sidewalk characteristics, terrace widths, and tree canopies.

Developing a differential streetscape design typology for all streets appropriate to their type and location will provide cohesive design parameters which will be used and incorporated into future street reconstruction projects. It is important to note that a streetscape design typology is different from functional classifications of streets. The map below categorizes Downtown streets to serve as a basis for streetscape design, with “premier streets” having the highest level of design and amenity, and “neighborhood streets” having the lowest. A more encompassing description of “complete streets” can be found on page 78.



*Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard is a premier street*



*Blair Street is a thoroughfare*



*West Main Street is a neighborhood street*

## URBAN FOREST

A healthy urban forest comprised of all the trees within the public right-of-way and on public and private property can contribute greatly to perceptions of a community. Recent development has generally occupied more lot area and left less room for existing or new trees. This has put a premium on having healthy and sustainable trees along streets and sidewalks. Trees with larger canopies in particular can greatly enhance a streetscape. Trees provide shade, habitat, color and other aesthetic benefits, reduce the urban heat island effect, and offer many other benefits. The importance of street trees in maximizing the goal of developing a tree canopy on Downtown streets cannot be overstated.



*Canopy trees in the terrace can greatly enhance the look and feel of a street*



*Trees can frame important views, such as these views to the Capitol down West Washington Avenue or to Lake Mendota down North Hamilton Street*

## **URBAN FOREST RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 3.5:*** *Ensure that Downtown's urban forest continues to flourish.* 🌿

***Recommendation 52:*** *Maintain tree lined streets by requiring new development to plant shade trees within the terrace and that the City fill gaps by replacing missing terrace trees with new shade trees.*

***Recommendation 53:*** *Require a diversity of species for street trees to add interest and protect against infestations and diseases.*

***Recommendation 54:*** *Require new development to provide space and plant trees in side and/or rear yards, as well as in the front yard where there are required setbacks.*

***Recommendation 55:*** *Consider establishing a tree preservation ordinance.*

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## **KEY 4: MAINTAIN STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS AND DISTRICTS**

Downtown is a collection of great neighborhoods and districts, but it is much more than that. Each neighborhood is unique, but it is the quilting together of these unique places and the relationships among them that creates the vitality Madison's downtown is known for. This plan seeks to strengthen Downtown neighborhoods and districts while recognizing that they are not static, but constantly evolving. It celebrates the variety of places that comprise the Downtown by articulating what makes them unique and identifiable, and includes recommendations to preserve, enhance, and sometimes to guide the transition of these neighborhoods and districts over time.

Downtowns in cities around the world have well known neighborhoods and districts. When people recall cities they have visited, they often think about the unique districts that help shape their mental image of that place. Characteristics such as land use, architecture, building scale, topography, vegetation, inhabitants, and activities all contribute to one's experience of a city. These characteristics usually vary from one part of the city to the next. Groupings of similar characteristics form districts that are recognizable as distinct places. It is this continuum of unique places that ensure these downtowns offer something for everyone. Some areas are more active while some are more passive, but all make an important contribution to the overall Downtown. It is not the intent of this plan to strictly delineate Downtown's neighborhoods and districts by drawing hard edges on a map, but generally define them and strengthen those qualities that make them unique places while promoting "permeable boundaries" that weave together to form a cohesive Downtown.

This section of the plan includes a brief discussion of the smaller neighborhood and district sub-areas within the Downtown, and offers a future direction for each. It also provides recommendations specific to those areas, in addition to those found in other sections of this plan.



Prepared by City of Madison Planning Division - November 2011

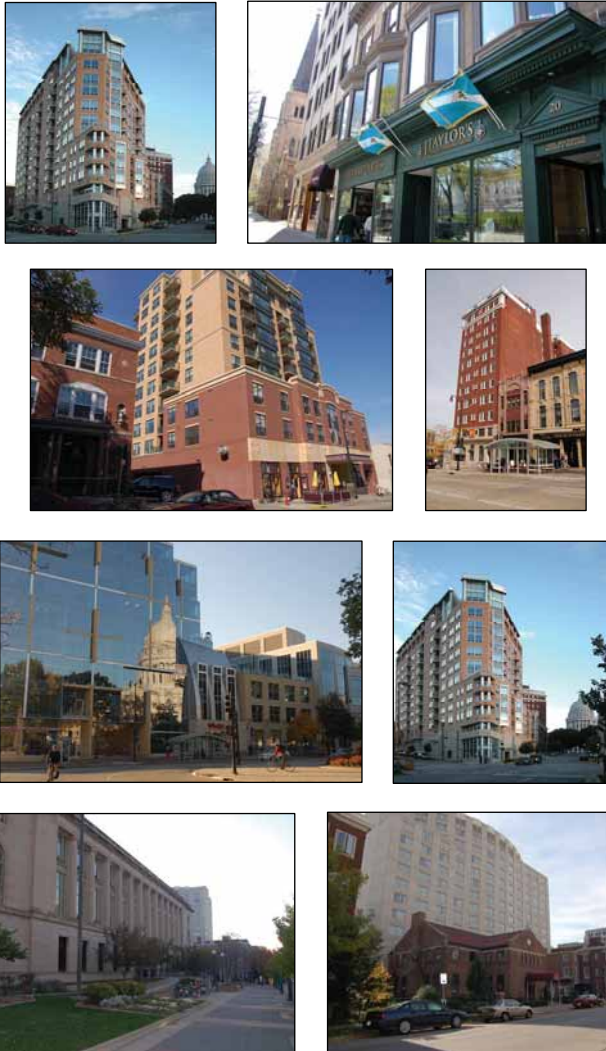
### Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is the nucleus of Downtown and accommodates a wide variety of office, employment, retail, government, residential and other uses in larger-scale buildings that comprise the most densely developed part of the city. It is anchored by the State Capitol and Capitol Square-- the geographic and symbolic center of the city and host of many major community events. The Downtown Core has experienced significant development in the past twenty years and numerous redevelopment opportunities remain. Block 89, the Risser Justice Building, the State Department of Administration building and Tommy Thompson State Office Building, the Madison Mark, the Dane County Courthouse, the Hilton Hotel, and the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center are just some of the buildings constructed in the Downtown Core since the last Downtown Plan was adopted. The Downtown Core contains many historic buildings, and is home to the Simeon Mills National Register Historic District. There are also several important views to both lakes, and of the Capitol through this area.

Continued expansion of a mix of uses, such as employment, retail, entertainment, and residential, will help ensure that the Downtown Core remains a popular destination beyond normal business hours. Street frontages and the first floor of buildings around Capitol Square should be reserved for non-residential uses to provide an active pedestrian connection between State Street and the King Street-Monona Terrace area.

Major new development opportunities exist on the Brayton Lot, public parking structures and other sites. Development of the Judge Doyle Square project, that could potentially incorporate a hotel, retail and office

space, and multi-modal transportation connections, is currently in the planning stage, with initial phases of redevelopment expected to occur in the near term. It is particularly important to preserve the landmark and potential landmark buildings on the Capitol Square and the triangular blocks at the corners of the Square. These buildings provide the Capitol Square with a diversity of engaging spaces and architecture which adds to its vitality and life. These blocks also provide smaller first floor venues that house numerous small retail and restaurant businesses.



Scenes from the Downtown Core

## **DOWNTOWN CORE RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 4.1:*** *The Downtown Core is the center of Downtown, and should generally possess the highest intensity of development. A mix of office, employment, retail, government, residential, cultural, entertainment, and other uses should be pursued to retain the area's vibrancy, including beyond normal business hours.*

***Recommendation 56:*** *Reserve street frontages around Capitol Square, and on King Street, South Pinckney Street, East Wilson Street, and the 100 blocks of West and East Main Streets for non-residential uses on the ground floor, focusing on retail and entertainment uses.*

***Recommendation 57:*** *Develop more active uses between Capitol Square and the Capitol East District, particularly where opportunities exist (i.e., the Brayton Lot, Government East Parking Ramp, and the US Bank Building).*

***Recommendation 58:*** *Reinforce the identity of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a civic spine connecting the Capitol to Monona Terrace.*

***Recommendation 59:*** *Update the Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Madison that currently apply to portions of the Downtown Core and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance.*

***Recommendation 60:*** *Integrate the Judge Doyle Square project and multi-modal transportation hub into the built environment of the area and capitalize on the opportunities it presents to implement public and private improvements in the area as described in this Downtown Plan.*

***Recommendation 61:*** *Preserve "triangle (flatiron) blocks" at the corners of Capitol Square including flat-iron buildings, for smaller-scale, active urban uses, such as entertainment, restaurants, shopping and cultural activities.*


***Recommendation 62:*** *Preserve and rehabilitate landmarks, potential landmarks, and other significant older structures, including flat-iron buildings.*

## STATE STREET RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 4.2** *The State Street district's existing character should be supported, with no major changes to the street's function or scale envisioned. Ground floor spaces should be reserved for retail and eating/drinking establishments while additional office uses on upper floors should be considered. Many of the buildings are historic or architecturally significant and should be retained.*

**Recommendation 63:** *Update the Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Madison and the Downtown Design Zone standards for the State Street area and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance.*

**Recommendation 64:** *Support the retention and establishment of locally-owned small businesses.*

**Recommendation 65:** *Preserve and rehabilitate significant older structures, including flat-iron buildings.* 

## State Street

State Street is widely considered to be the city's premier street. The six-block long transit/bicycle/pedestrian mall connects Capitol Square to the University of Wisconsin, where it transitions to a pedestrian-only mall for its final two blocks. It is a lively corridor comprised mostly of 2-4 story, small footprint buildings housing ground floor shops, restaurants, and bars, with upper story residential and office uses. The diversity of businesses, the architecture of the buildings, and quality of the streetscape work together to create vibrancy for the district. A node of cultural uses near the Square includes the Overture Center, State Historical and Veteran's Museums, and the City's Central Library. Recent planning efforts-- the *State Street Strategic Plan* (1999) and subsequent *State Street Design Project Plan* (2002)-- sought to reinforce the commercial and aesthetic cohesion of the district. The resulting reconstruction project expanded the streetscape design approximately one block on either side of State Street to reinforce the district feel that extends beyond State Street itself. State Street is not an historic district. In 1995, a National Register Historic District was proposed, but was not supported by a majority of the property owners at that time, and did not move forward.

It is critical to retain the vibrancy and intimacy of State Street itself, which is largely attributable to the rhythm of buildings with narrow, small, first floor commercial spaces that accommodate many small businesses. However, some larger-scale redevelopment could be appropriate just off State Street near University Avenue and Gorham Street, as reflected in the Maximum Building Heights Map (see page 42). Because of its heavy use, it is especially important that State Street buildings and infrastructure be maintained at a high level so businesses do not decline. Given the importance of the scale and character of the buildings and number of historic structures, creating a local and/or National Register Historic District remains a viable tool to help achieve the long-term vision. However, in light of past efforts, this should only be considered if initiated and supported by a majority of the property owners.



Scenes from State Street



## Mifflin


The Mifflin district is known for its abundance of student rental housing, predominantly characterized by houses that were divided into apartments years ago. A majority of the existing structures in the Mifflin district, though structurally sound, are in need of significant cosmetic improvements as well as general upgrading and modernization. Many of the existing buildings are only marginally maintained and many have been altered extensively on the interior. As a consequence of decades of deferred maintenance, significant reinvestment would be required for most of this housing to become attractive to a wider range of residents. Most back yards are used for parking, with many rented out to downtown commuters. Overall, however, the Mifflin district still retains a physical sense of place, and a consistent scale and rhythm along the street is created by the regularity of building forms in these largely intact blocks. The area also retains a strong sense of identity within the community--- whether rooted in the area’s historic ties to the 1960s counter culture and the anti-war movement, the annual block party, or its role in providing affordable housing opportunities for university students.

Because the housing stock continues to slowly deteriorate with little incentive to invest in improvements, maintaining the status quo for this area is not considered a realistic or desirable long-term solution. Although there are several potentially viable approaches to enhancing the future of the Mifflin district, this Downtown Plan recommends an approach that will strengthen the sense of place and breathe new life into the area by preserving its essential character while also introducing significant opportunities for new development. The recommended approach builds on the existing pattern of building forms along Mifflin Street, West Washington Avenue, and Bassett Street and proposes the rehabilitation and reconstruction of much of the existing housing stock, as well as demolishing some structures and possibly moving some houses to provide opportunities for new infill redevelopment. This will also provide for a greater diversity of housing options that could attract a broader mix of residents to the area-- especially along West Washington Avenue and towards the Bassett Neighborhood. A key element of this approach is retaining the house-like building form that defines the core of the district, with its rhythm of two to two-and-one-half story houses with gables facing the street, generous front porches, and a consistent front yard setback. It is not necessarily intended to preserve the existing houses (unless they are historic), but rehabilitating the existing houses would be consistent with this concept.


A central feature of the recommended development concept is a new ‘urban lane’ proposed between West Washington Avenue and West Mifflin Street that will facilitate new development on the interior of these two blocks. This pedestrian-friendly corridor will include sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian scale lighting, and be lined with new buildings located in the “rear” portions of lots that front on West Washington or Mifflin Street. The lane will also provide vehicular access to underground parking for these buildings.

### **MIFFLIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 4.3:*** *The Mifflin neighborhood should build on its strong history as an affordable student-oriented residential enclave. It should evolve a strong sense of place by retaining the consistent scale and rhythm of the largely intact blocks of houses that form its core along the 400-500 blocks of West Mifflin Street and West Washington Avenue. Larger-scale redevelopment projects should be directed to the perimeter of the area along Broom, West Dayton, and Bedford Streets, with smaller-scale infill projects occurring along a new mid-block urban lane.*

***Recommendation 66:*** *Develop a detailed comprehensive conservation/redevelopment implementation strategy for this area that combines rehabilitating houses, moving houses, and demolishing some structures to facilitate new development as illustrated in the concept plan, possibly including a Neighborhood Conservation District.* 

***Recommendation 67:*** *Update the Downtown Design Zone standards for the Mifflin area to implement the concept plan and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance as appropriate.*

***Recommendation 68:*** *Establish a pedestrian-friendly mid-block urban lane between and parallel to West Washington Avenue and West Mifflin Street in the 400 and 500 blocks to allow development in the rear yards.* 

***Recommendation 69:*** *Prioritize the redevelopment of 1960s era “zero lot line” residential sites.*

For the recommended concept to be realized, a comprehensive and coordinated implementation plan will need to be developed. As illustrated below, the proposed approach for most of the district relies on either improving the existing houses or reconstructing a new building with a similar house-like form, combined with new development on the site---usually on the rear portions of lots along the new urban lane. Moving parking beneath the new developments would also create true usable open space in the rear yards, instead of the surface parking lots that currently exist on most parcels.



Scenes from Mifflin



Mifflin Concept – plan view



Mifflin Concept – bird's eye view



Mifflin Concept – looking west



Mifflin Concept – urban lane

## Bassett

Over the past twenty years, the Bassett Neighborhood has experienced the replacement of many of its older houses (mostly student renter-occupied) with new multi-family structures (both owner- and renter-occupied), along with several new commercial projects that together have helped revitalize the neighborhood. The *Bassett Neighborhood Plan* was adopted in 1997, and is largely reflected in this Downtown Plan. The *Downtown Historic Preservation Plan* identifies this area as a potential neighborhood conservation district. Neighborhood conservation districts provide a tool in the Zoning Ordinance to help ensure important, unique, and consistent development patterns and design features (such as setbacks, roof forms, or the presence of large front porches) within the neighborhood are conserved. The Bassett Neighborhood is located close to Lake Monona and Monona Bay, but not particularly well connected to either.

This plan recommends the continuation of this revitalization through the provision of new housing options, the rehabilitation of some existing structures, and the addition of a limited amount of neighborhood-serving commercial space in mixed-use buildings. The long dimensions of the blocks in this neighborhood consistently run from east to west. Rehabilitation of houses along the east-west streets should be encouraged, where the context makes such rehabilitation feasible. However, the continuation of selective redevelopment that is compatible with the scale and character of the existing buildings is expected. Slightly larger buildings should be directed to the ends of the blocks and along the Broom Street frontage. Broom Street demarcates the smaller scale of the Bassett Neighborhood and the larger developments to the east. The first step in implementing this recommendation for a neighborhood conservation district would be to undertake a study or plan to articulate those specific characteristics of the neighborhood that are sought to be preserved. The character along West Washington Avenue should compliment that on the opposite side of the street. Preserving views of the lake and strengthening pedestrian and bicycle connections and access to it are important to facilitate residents' use and enjoyment of the lake and park space.

### **BASSETT RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 4.4:*** *The Bassett neighborhood should continue its predominately residential nature, with an evolving mix of new higher-density buildings carefully integrated with existing older structures that are compatible in scale and character. Limited neighborhood-serving commercial uses in mixed-use developments would be appropriate at specified locations, such as the intersection of West Main and Bassett Streets.*

***Recommendation 70:*** *Consider establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District as identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan.*

***Recommendation 71:*** *Incorporate the 400-500 blocks of West Washington Avenue and West Main Street into the implementation strategy described in the Mifflin District recommendations.*



Scenes from Bassett

**JOHNSON STREET BEND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 4.5:** *The Johnson Street Bend district should continue as a primarily higher density student residential area mixed with some new neighborhood serving retail uses. Underutilized parcels should transition to more intense development with a particular emphasis on creating active and engaging street frontages and quasi-public areas. Linkages to adjacent areas, including parks and open spaces, should be enhanced.*

**Recommendation 72:** *Update the Downtown Design Zone standards for Johnson Street Bend area and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance.*

**Johnson Street Bend**

The Johnson Street Bend district is characterized by its preponderance of large-scale, high-density apartment buildings occupied almost exclusively by UW students. It contains a variety of building types, styles and character that do not relate well to one another. Its location near campus and State Street has led to the development of several student apartment towers in recent years, and several potential redevelopment sites remain. In the last fifteen years, nearly 1,100 new bedrooms have been created in this five-block area in buildings with little or no usable outdoor open space. During this time, no additional park space has been created in the area either.

This area is an appropriate location for higher density student residential area mixed with some commercial uses, including hotels and restaurants. It should continue to transition to more intense development of currently underutilized parcels, and plan

recommendations focus on creating active and engaging street frontages and public and quasi-public areas. Linkages to adjacent districts should be enhanced so it becomes less isolated. As evidenced by the frequent use of privately-owned vacant lots as de-facto park space, this area has a critical need for public open space just to meet the needs of its current residents. With the continued residential growth of this area as proposed in this plan, it is critical that a new park be established in the vicinity.



Scenes from Johnson Street Bend

**WEST RAIL CORRIDOR  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 4.6:** *The West Rail Corridor should capitalize on its numerous growth opportunities incorporating a new multi-modal transfer facility.*

**Recommendation 73:** *Provide adequate intermodal connections in order to support transit oriented development in the area.*



**Recommendation 74:** *Preserve and rehabilitate landmark and other quality older commercial buildings.*



**Recommendation 75:** *Allow mixed-use development in loft-type buildings along Bedford Street.*



**West Rail Corridor**

The West Rail Corridor is presently dominated by institutional and business uses located in larger buildings that don't relate well to each other. The western edge of the district is part of the UW campus. There is also an abundance of surface parking lots and underutilized properties. The district also contains a few local historic landmarks.

The West Rail Corridor has significant growth opportunities and a high potential for change. Its accessibility and proximity to the University make it a choice location for new employment (including University of Wisconsin) and district-serving commercial uses that may incorporate some residential development. Taller buildings closer to the railroad corridor and new loft-style buildings at other locations within the district could provide the flexibility for a variety of uses and accommodate change over time. Residential uses should be provided along Bedford Street. Landmark buildings must be preserved. The overriding concept is to create a dynamic area that, while focused on

employment uses, integrates eating, drinking and retail uses. Although some residential uses are encouraged, single-use apartment or condominium buildings should not be allowed. The West Rail Corridor's proximity to major streets, bike paths and pedestrian corridors, coupled with a potential rail transit stop could make it a highly accessible and fitting location for a new inter-modal transportation facility.



*This image illustrates the development potential that exists in the West Rail Corridor*



*A bird's eye view of the West Rail Corridor, with Regent Street in the foreground*



*Scenes from the West Rail Corridor*

### Tobacco Warehouse

The Tobacco Warehouse district has experienced a successful transformation in recent years to a residential and office area that builds on its heritage. Construction of new buildings has been integrated with the restoration of historic structures pursuant to a master plan. Several warehouse buildings have been adapted for use both as residential units (the American Tobacco Warehouses) and commercial/office space (the Delta Warehouses). The Tobacco Warehouse district is located near Monona Bay and a bike path bisects the area.

Future emphasis should be on strengthening connections to surrounding areas, particularly the adjacent Bassett Neighborhood, and enhancing its southern and western edges, streetscapes, and open spaces. Remaining warehouses present future opportunities for similar adaptive reuse.

#### **TOBACCO WAREHOUSE RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 4.7:*** *The Tobacco Warehouse district should continue its revitalization as a residential and office area blending new buildings and restoration of historic structures. Future emphasis should be on strengthening connections to surrounding areas and enhancing the streetscape and open spaces.*

***Recommendation 76:*** *Encourage the adaptive reuse of older warehouse and other quality older commercial buildings.*





Scenes from the Tobacco Warehouse district

### LANGDON RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 4.8:** *The Langdon neighborhood should build on its history as a traditional student neighborhood, including a concentration of fraternities and sororities. It should continue to accommodate a limited amount of higher-density residential redevelopment on selected sites while maintaining the area’s historic and architectural integrity. Preserving and enhancing Langdon Street as the spine of the district will be key. The pedestrian walkway between the lake and Langdon Street should be formalized to enhance its aesthetics and safety and to make stronger connections to the lakefront path.*

**Recommendation 77:** *Encourage preservation and rehabilitation of contributing historic buildings.* 🌿

**Recommendation 78:** *Encourage relatively higher-density infill and redevelopment that is compatible with the historic context in scale and design on non-landmark locations and sites that are not identified as contributing to the National Register Historic District.* 🌿

*(continued on the next page)*

### Langdon

The Langdon neighborhood is a traditional student-oriented neighborhood, including a concentration of fraternities and sororities and multi-family rental structures. The vast majority of residents are college students. It is located adjacent to the UW campus, between Lake Mendota and State Street. The majority of the area is in the Langdon Street National Register Historic District and it contains many contributing buildings and several local landmarks. The eastern portion of the area is in the Mansion Hill local and National Register Historic Districts. Because much of the neighborhood is already in a National Register Historic District, but not in a local historic district, there can sometimes be confusion about the applicable regulations when new development is proposed. Many of the highest quality buildings from an historic architectural perspective, have been converted to apartments resulting in inefficient internal layouts. Langdon Street is also the center of “Greek Row”, and fraternities and sororities as a whole have done a particularly good job of maintaining their houses over time. Although other buildings have suffered from years of neglect as student rental properties, they collectively establish a clear identity for the area. The area is in need of some revitalization, but it has a well grounded character that still makes it a very popular place to live.

The Langdon neighborhood is well situated to continue as a predominately student neighborhood. It is one of the most densely developed areas of the city, but can accommodate a limited amount of higher-density residential redevelopment on selected sites while preserving the historic and architectural heritage of the area. New development must enhance the essential character of the neighborhood and not diminish views of the lake.

This plan recommends that a local historic district be considered to support the National Register designation and clarify the desire to preserve the historic character. Wholesale redevelopment is not the goal, but a limited amount of new development to replace non-contributing, blighted housing will benefit the area.

Lake access should be enhanced through implementation of the recommended lakefront path and the development of street ends to become viable public spaces. The pedestrian walkway between the lake and Langdon Street should be formalized to enhance its aesthetics and safety and to make stronger connections to the proposed lakefront path. Opportunities for implementing these amenities should be pursued in conjunction with new development that occurs adjacent to these corridors, but that potential should not be justification for approving new development that is otherwise inconsistent with the recommendations of this plan.



Scenes from Langdon

## Mansion Hill

The Mansion Hill Neighborhood possesses a rich architectural heritage as reflected by inclusion of most of the neighborhood in local and National Register Historic Districts. It contains numerous local landmarks and contributing buildings, most of which were originally very large single-family homes converted to multi-family rental properties years ago. Although it is adjacent to Lake Mendota, public access to the lake is limited by the high number of privately-owned lakefront properties.

The historic character of the area is a major asset for the city and Downtown, and new development should focus on residential opportunities that reflect these historic attributes. Several larger institutional and employment uses are also located in the neighborhood, and ensuring the long-term viability of these uses will also benefit the area. However, Mansion Hill is not viewed as a significant growth area for non-residential uses. Some limited commercial development, such as small-scale cafes or coffee shops along the lakefront in the lower levels of lakefront buildings, may be appropriate. The largest potential site for new development is the land currently owned by National Guardian Life located between their office building and Lake Mendota. Although there has been much speculation about this site's future, a renewed interest has been generated by the approval of the Edgewater Hotel redevelopment

## **LANGDON RECOMMENDATIONS**


*(continued)*

***Recommendation 79:*** Update the Downtown Design Zone standards for the Langdon Street area and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance.

***Recommendation 80:*** Explore financial incentives (such as small cap Tax Increment Finance loans or grants) to rehabilitate landmarks, potential landmarks, and contributing buildings within existing TIF districts, including for rental properties.

## **MANSION HILL RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 4.9:*** Mansion Hill's historic character is a major asset and establishing a "complete historic district experience" of restored buildings, distinctive streetscape amenities, and a limited amount of new residential development that preserves and reflects these historic attributes should be pursued. The large historic homes provide a diversity of housing opportunities for executives, families, and students.

***Recommendation 81:*** Rehabilitate existing housing while encouraging selective residential infill. 

***Recommendation 82:*** Preserve the character of the Mansion Hill Historic District and ensure that new development is compatible with the historic context in scale and design.

***Recommendation 83:*** Large office-employment uses should be limited to existing development, and any redevelopment or infill of these sites should encourage residential as the predominant use.

and new proposed hotel structure on the adjacent property. This plan recommends that new development be residential, but a limited amount of complementary non-residential uses may be appropriate. Boat slips or docking facilities (but not a marina), for example, could serve residential uses on the site and in the neighborhood. A private drive connecting Wisconsin Avenue to North Pinckney Street is recommended to enhance pedestrian and vehicular connectivity and provide a framework for future development.

Public views to the lake should be preserved however, and a lakefront path should be pursued as described on pages 85-86. Wisconsin Avenue should be enhanced to reflect its prominence as a major avenue radiating from the Capitol.



Scenes from Mansion Hill

**JAMES MADISON PARK  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 4.10:** *The James Madison Park neighborhood should accommodate a mix of dwelling units, some of which are suitable to families with children. The renovation of existing houses coupled with selective redevelopment that generally reflects the scale and rhythm of the existing structures should help reinvigorate the area, provide a variety of housing options, and strengthen linkages to the adjacent Tenney-Lapham neighborhood.*

**Recommendation 84:** *Promote the construction and rehabilitation of family-supportive housing and consider adopting an ordinance with standards for such development.*

**Recommendation 85:** *Require that new development provide ample on-site open space and play areas for use by young children, and do not waive usable open space requirements in the James Madison Park District.*

*(continued on the next page)*

**James Madison Park**

The James Madison Park Neighborhood is characterized by fairly intact blocks of two- to three-story houses. Many of these houses have been long time rental properties.

The renovation of existing structures, coupled with selective redevelopment that reflects the scale and rhythm of the existing structures, will help ensure the future vibrancy of the area, provide a variety of housing options, and strengthen linkages to the adjacent Tenney-Lapham and Mansion Hill Neighborhoods. During the planning process, many participants expressed a desire to create Downtown neighborhoods that were inviting to families with children. With its proximity to Lapham Elementary School, presence of houses that could accommodate such families, and a large park (James Madison Park), this neighborhood provides the best opportunity to foster this type of environment. The *Downtown Historic Preservation Plan* (1998) recommends that a neighborhood conservation area be created, “wherein the existing residential character of the core of the neighborhood would be preserved and encroachment by incompatible uses will be prevented.” A neighborhood conservation district is a tool provided in the Zoning Ordinance to help ensure that important, unique, and consistent development patterns and design



features (such as setbacks, roof forms, or the presence of large front porches) within the neighborhood are conserved. The first step in implementing this recommendation would be a study to articulate the specific characteristics of the neighborhood to be preserved. The Fourth Lake Ridge National Register Historic District runs along portions of East Gorham Street.



Scenes from James Madison Park

## First Settlement

The First Settlement Neighborhood includes a small local historic district that is primarily residential with commercial uses around its perimeter. It includes a portion of the East Wilson Street National Register Historic District, and possesses numerous landmark, potential landmark, and contributing buildings. The *First Settlement Neighborhood Plan* was completed in 1995.

This neighborhood has several relatively large potential infill and redevelopment sites along its edges. Sensitive and well-designed development on key sites (Brayton Lot, Block 115, and the City Water Utility reservoir site) could strengthen the neighborhood and its identity as a historic enclave. A potential rail transit stop nearby could drive additional development in this area. This area is somewhat isolated from other neighborhoods and Lake Monona by major streets, and opportunities to better connect it to the lake should be pursued. Views of the lake from within the neighborhood should be

## **JAMES MADISON PARK**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS** *(continued)*

***Recommendation 86:*** Encourage family-supportive housing design in new multi-family developments, including more modern, larger units (2-3 bedrooms) and true usable on-site open space.

***Recommendation 87:*** Allow relatively higher-density development that conforms to the Maximum Building Heights Map along North Hamilton, Butler and Gorham Streets. 🌿

***Recommendation 88:*** Allow infill and redevelopment along Hancock, Franklin and Blair Streets generally compatible in scale and design with the predominantly “house like” neighborhood character.

***Recommendation 89:*** Consider establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District as identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan.

## **FIRST SETTLEMENT**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 4.11:*** The First Settlement neighborhood should build on its historic character and focus new development on key sites on the edge of the historic core to strengthen the neighborhood and its identity as a historic neighborhood. Opportunities exist to better connect this area to the lake and views of it from within the neighborhood should be preserved.

***Recommendation 90:*** Focus more-intensive development on selective vacant or underutilized sites at the historic district’s edges (Brayton Lot, Block 115, City Water Utility reservoir site, and segments of the Blair Street and East Wilson Street, and Butler Street frontages). 🌿

*(continued on the next page)*

**FIRST SETTLEMENT**

**RECOMMENDATIONS** (continued)

**Recommendation 91:** Preserve the character of the First Settlement Historic District and ensure that new development is compatible with the historic context in scale and design.

**Recommendation 92:** Rehabilitate existing housing and selectively allow new housing on vacant or underutilized non-historic sites within the historic core.

**Recommendation 93:** Improve public lakefront access as part of any redevelopment south of East Wilson Street.

preserved. The Wilson Street commercial corridor and its extension to King Street should be enhanced as a cohesive and engaging commercial spine.



Scenes from First Settlement

**CAMPUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 4.12:** The emphasis of the Campus district should be on continuing to improve how it interfaces with the Downtown along and near its borders. Opportunities exist to integrate complimentary uses while making a clear and coordinated transition to campus.

[Note: There are no additional specific recommendations for this area beyond what is already included elsewhere in this Plan.]

**Campus**

The eastern edge of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus interfaces with the Downtown in significant ways. Portions of the campus district function essentially as internal components of the larger UW campus, while other portions of the district are an interrelated mix of University uses and private property and non-University activities. The 700 and 800 blocks of State Street are often believed to be part of the campus, but are in fact City-owned right-of-way for State Street and plans are currently being developed by the City for its near term reconstruction.

This Downtown Plan encourages appropriate interlacing of University and non-University uses and activities at the campus edges to promote engagement and synergy between the University and the community as a whole.

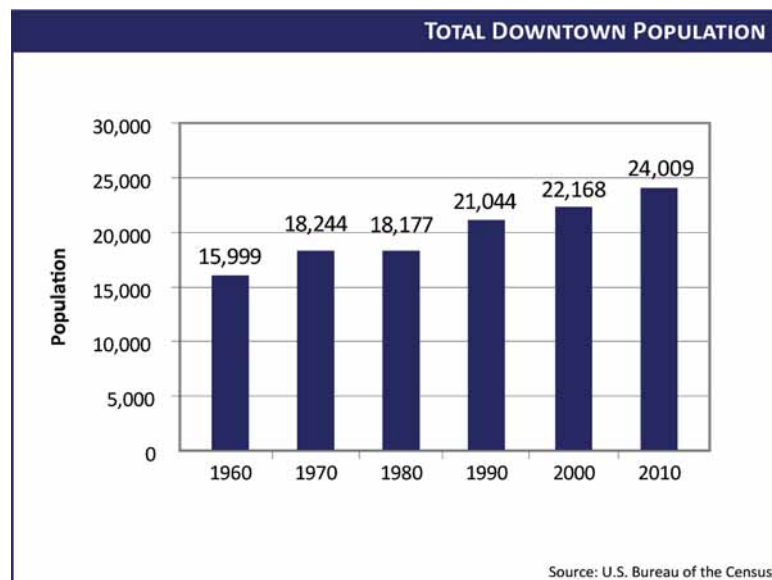


Scenes from the UW Campus

## KEY 5: ENHANCE LIVABILITY

Downtown has always been an attractive place for people to live, and has much to offer its 24,000 residents. Downtown has experienced a significant increase in popularity as a place to live during the last twenty years, with nearly 3,000 new residents added between 1990 and 2010. A growing Downtown population has also helped to support additional commercial development. This plan encourages further development of a complete living environment for Downtown residents-- one where they can meet their daily needs, shop, work, recreate, and enjoy a strong sense of community.

Over the last two decades, Downtown's residential population has become much more diverse. Several neighborhoods that were formerly dominated by student rental housing now have many new residents, including young professionals, empty nesters, and retirees. This change is reflected in the data below that indicate a more rapid increase in the number of new housing units than the number of new residents, suggesting a smaller household size as would be expected with these population groups. Most are moving Downtown for the same reasons— they are attracted to the many amenities and convenience that Downtown offers. Previous planning efforts have focused on comprehensively improving the quality of the Downtown experience, and the commitment to implementing many of the recommendations in those plans has contributed to Downtown's renewed popularity as a great place to live.

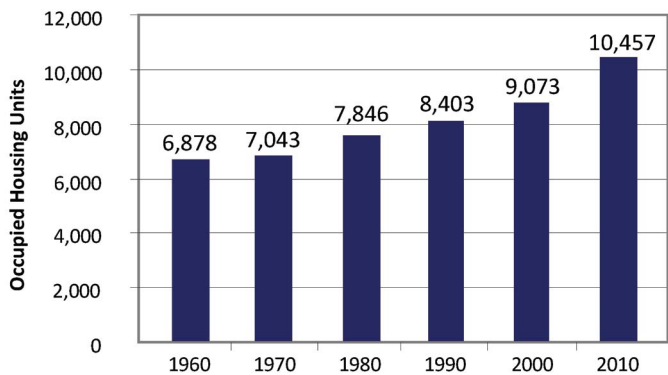


*Capitol West*

The increase in Downtown's residential population was accompanied by equally dramatic housing growth. City of Madison records show that over 3,600 new dwelling units were constructed Downtown between since the last Downtown plan was prepared in 1990. As shown on the graph on the following page, the US Census Bureau estimates a net increase of approximately 2,800 occupied dwelling units during this time. Although these numbers measure somewhat different statistics, both clearly illustrate a marked increase in Downtown's housing supply.<sup>6</sup>

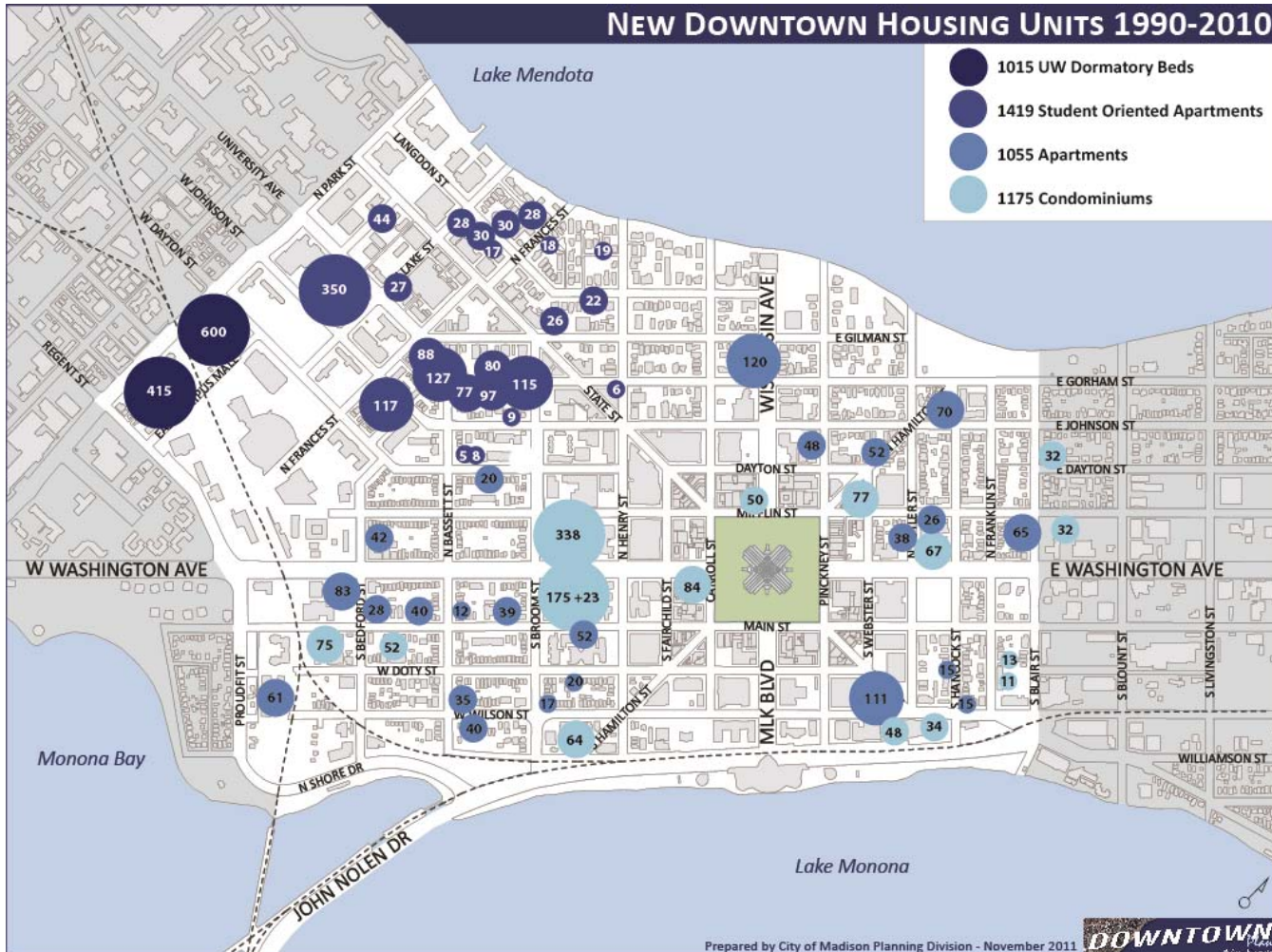
<sup>6</sup> Several factors contribute to this difference, including the City data counting the gross number of new units, while the Census data represents the net change in housing units. Also, the Census figures reflect occupied dwelling units as of April 1, 2010 where the City figures reflect all new dwelling units (occupied or not) at the end of 2010.

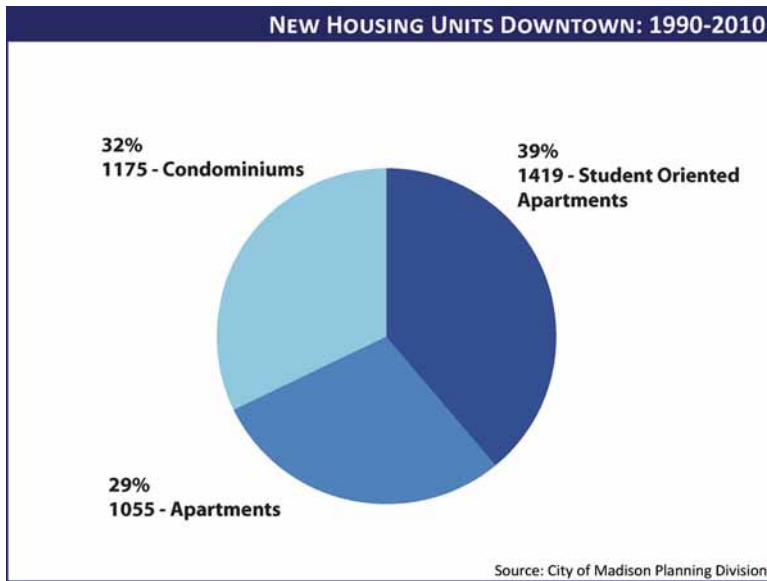
### TOTAL DOWNTOWN OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

### NEW DOWNTOWN HOUSING UNITS 1990-2010





**Diversity of Living Options**

Downtown offers the greatest variety of housing anywhere in the city - from high-rise apartments and condominiums to single-family homes. Continuing to expand choices of housing opportunities will help ensure that Downtown remains a place where people of different ages, incomes, and ethnicities can live together. Between 1990 and 2010, nearly 1,200 condominium units were created Downtown, providing new opportunities for owner-occupied housing. Although this trend has slowed in recent years, it testifies to the desirability of Downtown living and a return of residents willing to own and invest in Downtown for the long term. During this time, nearly 2,500 new apartment units were also developed-- many aimed at college students and provided in taller apartment buildings located close to the UW campus. This, in turn, reduced student demand in some Downtown neighborhoods and opened up the potential for new owner-occupied housing opportunities and a mix of new units occupied primarily by young professionals and other workers.

A diversity of owner and rental housing types and resident populations in close proximity to goods and services will help to ensure that Madison's downtown neighborhoods remain healthy in the long term.

**DIVERSITY OF LIVING OPTIONS  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 5.1:** Create strategies to encourage a greater diversity of living options by providing a variety of housing types, sizes, and prices throughout the Downtown.*

***Recommendation 94:** Work with major Downtown employers (hospitals, government, University) on strategies to encourage housing for all segments of their workforce, including upper management, professional level and support staff, in/near Downtown. 🌱*

***Recommendation 95:** Provide incentives for the conversion and rehabilitation of long time rental housing to owner-occupancy, targeting the James Madison Park, Mansion Hill, and Bassett Neighborhoods.*



*Downtown offers a range of housing types for both owners and renters in single-family, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings*

## STUDENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 5.2:** Provide decent, safe, and affordable housing that is conveniently located for the large population of students. 🌱

**Recommendation 96:** Ensure adequate communication among the City, University, landlords, and local property managers on issues of building inspection, safety, property upkeep, and rights/responsibilities of tenants.

**Recommendation 97:** Work with the University to plan for, and coordinate on issues related to, future student housing needs.

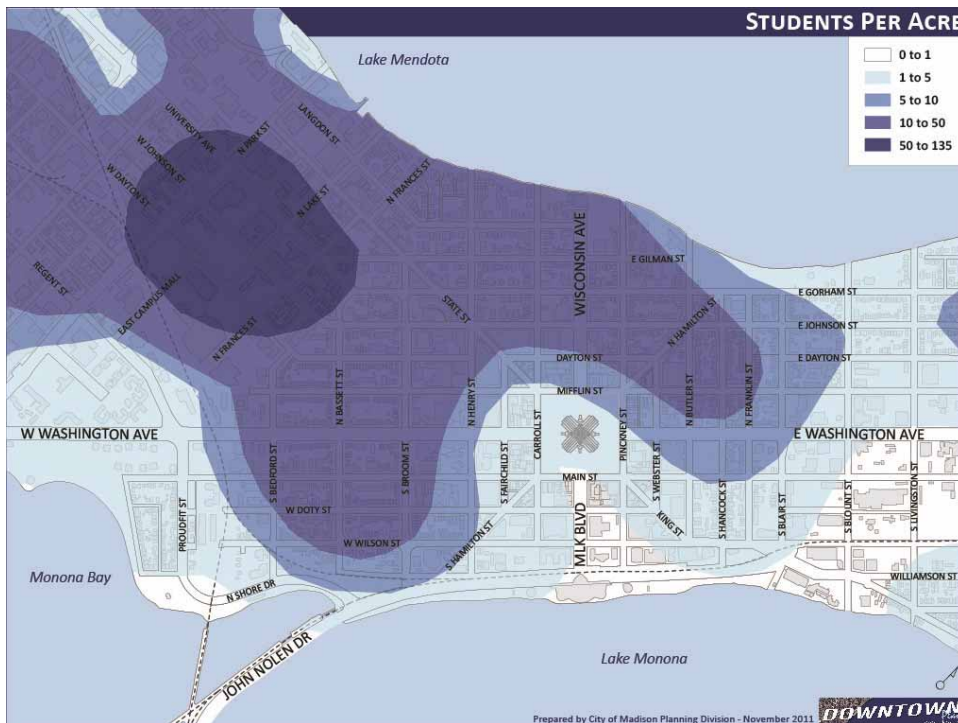
**Recommendation 98:** Locate higher density housing suitable for a diversity of student populations in a variety of building types close to the UW campus.

## Students

The University of Wisconsin-Madison campus is interlaced with the Downtown and is a vital component of its economic and cultural fabric. With an enrollment in excess of 40,000, university students have been a major part of the Downtown population for many years. The map below shows the relative density of students residing in and close to the Downtown.

Although student housing comes in many forms, much of it is provided in structures originally built as single-family homes and converted to student rentals years ago when University enrollment soared with only limited new on-campus housing being built. Reinvestment in these properties is often lacking, and in some areas, there is pressure to demolish and build new, higher-density residential buildings.

Locating new student housing closer to campus will be more convenient for the students and can contribute to the revitalization of Downtown neighborhoods by freeing up housing stock that has traditionally had a high percentage of student residents. However, the design of new student housing should be flexible for a range of potential occupants. Although the market for new student housing is expected to remain strong for the foreseeable future, that may not always be the case. New buildings, especially those further away from campus, should provide for a succession of future non-student occupants without requiring major modifications.



Grand Central – student-oriented apartments

## Families with Children

A consistent message heard throughout the planning process was that Downtown needs to have more living opportunities for families with children. This plan encourages the creation of additional housing units that are large enough to accommodate families with children, and which have the qualities to attract these families-- such as truly usable on-site open space.

Opportunities to provide additional family-oriented housing exist both through new construction and through converting back to single-family use houses that were been divided into student apartments. The addition of over 1,400 units of new student-oriented housing near campus will present some reconversion opportunities during the next twenty years as much of the older housing stock becomes relatively less attractive to student renters.

This Downtown Plan recognizes that to attract families with children, the necessary support infrastructure also needs to be in place including parks, schools, and daycare. Although families with children are welcome in all parts of Downtown, this plan identifies the James Madison Park district as the most promising area to establish a critical mass of children that will help attract others. The neighborhood seems well positioned to accommodate such families since it is close to Lapham Elementary School, James Madison Park, and the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood-- a neighborhood with a high percentage of single-family homes. Much of the existing housing in the James Madison Park Neighborhood consists of single-unit and two and three flat houses with reasonable potential for rehabilitation or reconversion for family housing.

The map on the following page shows the elementary school attendance areas within the Downtown and indicates the distance to each school.

### **FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 5.3:*** Encourage housing opportunities for families with children throughout the Downtown.

***Recommendation 99:*** Encourage family-supportive housing design in new multi-family developments, including more modern, larger units (2-3 bedrooms) and true usable on-site open space.

***Recommendation 100:*** Concentrate family-supportive housing in areas closest to elementary schools, such as the James Madison Park District, which is in walking distance to Lapham Elementary School. 🌿

***Recommendation 101:*** Encourage the Madison Metropolitan School District to maintain and enhance quality neighborhood schools in/near Downtown neighborhoods. 🌿

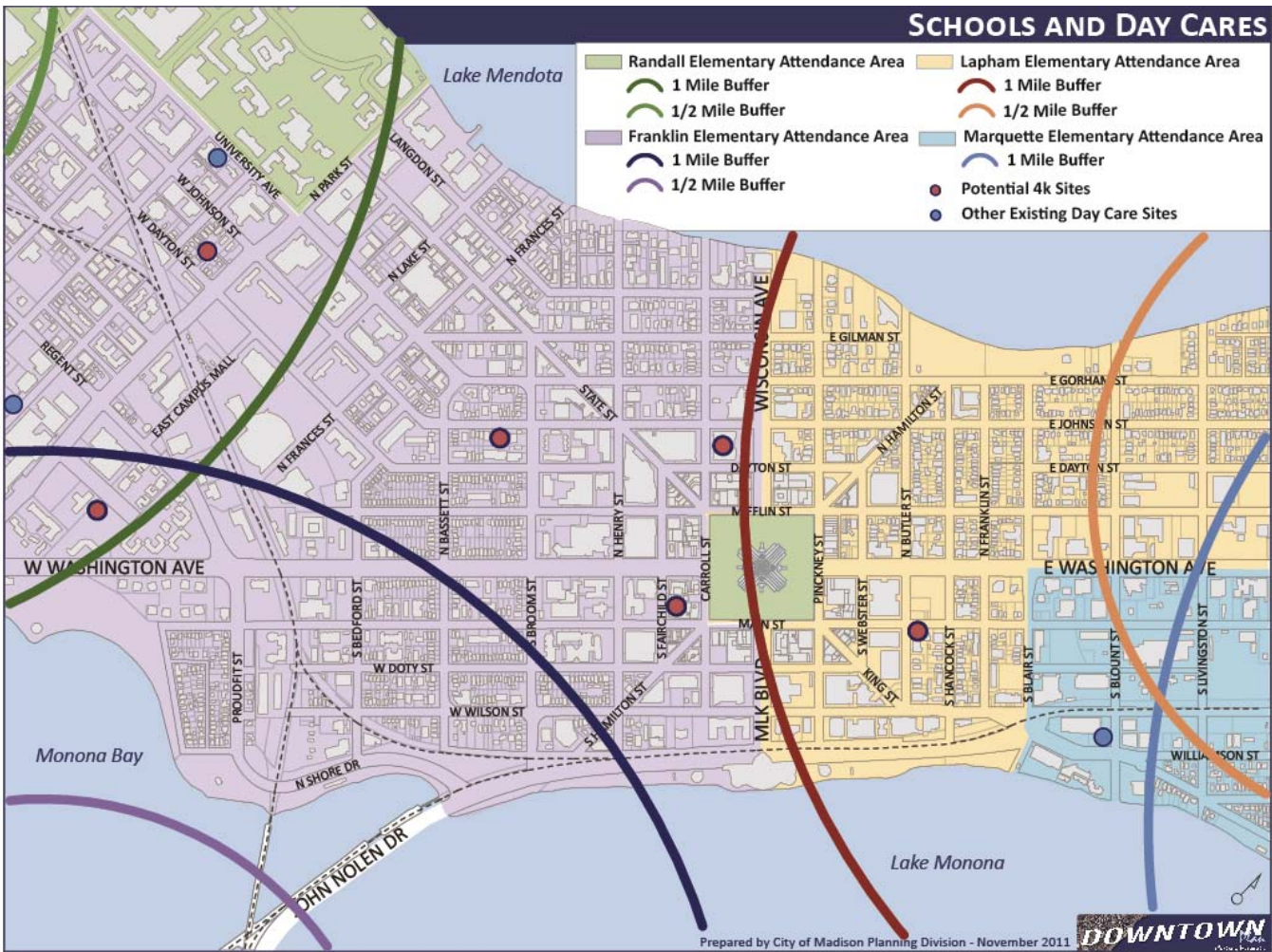
***Recommendation 102:*** Support the creation of day care facilities within the Downtown to support people living and working Downtown. 🌿



*The James Madison Park neighborhood has a lot to offer families with children, including a large park*



*Multi-family developments with on-site open space are generally more attractive to families with children*



**LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Objective 5.4:** Continue to provide a range of housing prices and rents to include units affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

**Recommendation 103:** Encourage a mix of unit sizes that will be affordable to a wide range of households in new development where economically feasible.

**Low- and Moderate-income Households**

Many individuals and households with low- to moderate-incomes also seek to live Downtown because it offers the widest variety of housing types and prices, proximity to employment opportunities, a wide range of transportation options, and many other amenities. As Downtown continues to evolve and new housing is constructed, opportunities must continue to be provided for those who otherwise might not be able to afford to live Downtown.



## Seniors

Older adults are also a significant part of Downtown’s population mix. An increasing number of empty nesters and retirees, including many from outside of the area, are choosing to make Downtown Madison their home. As the community's population continues to age and more baby boomers retire and look to downsize from their larger homes, Downtown is well positioned to continue to attract more older adults. Like other population segments, older adults are often attracted to Downtown by its amenities, wide range of activities in close proximity, and the availability of easily accessible transit options. A goal of this plan is to have a safe, senior friendly Downtown, including providing a variety of housing opportunities that can accommodate the changing needs of older adults as they age.

### **SENIORS RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 5.5: Provide Downtown housing opportunities for seniors.***

***Recommendation 104: Encourage housing that incorporates senior-friendly design that allows older adults to be able to age in place.***

***Recommendation 105: Work with the University on developing suitable locations for “alumni housing” for senior alums.***

***Recommendation 106: Encourage community activities for all ages, including those that are suitable for older adults near senior housing, including supporting Madison Senior Center activities.***



*Residents of Meriter Main Gate, a Downtown retirement community*



*The Madison Senior Center*



*Community gardens can bring together people of all ages*

## Special Needs Populations

Downtown is also home to a number of residents who have special needs. Although this group includes persons who have physical and/or mental health concerns, it can be broadly defined to include those with disabilities, those with addictions, those who are homeless, and generally those who need a higher level of services and support in their lives-- either permanently or temporarily. While it can be challenging, it is important that Downtown continue to be a welcoming and accommodating place for all of its citizens as it continues to grow and attract new residents.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 5.6: Support the provision of necessary services for special needs populations living Downtown.***

***Recommendation 107: Seek to provide Downtown housing options for special needs populations near/at locations where support services are available.***

***Recommendation 108: The City should work with service providers to coordinate services for special needs populations in the Downtown.***

## **SAFE LIVING ENVIRONMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 5.7:*** Continue to provide and enhance a safe living environment in all portions of the Downtown.

***Recommendation 109:*** Create safer pedestrian and living experiences through context sensitive lighting, and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CEPTED) techniques.

***Recommendation 110:*** Conduct more frequent building and property code inspections and expand to include enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance and Landmarks Ordinance where applicable.

***Recommendation 111:*** Consider adopting a higher level of building and property maintenance requirements within the Downtown.

## **Safe Living Environment**

All Madison residents deserve to live in a safe place. A safe living environment goes beyond just having low crime rates-- it also extends to ensuring a well maintained housing stock and having residents feel safe in their homes, or anywhere Downtown, day or night.

The concept of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is based on the idea that proper design and effective use of the built environment can reduce the incidence and fear of crime. This in turn leads to improvements in the quality of life.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast to the approach of addressing crime concerns by implementing unattractive security measures such as locks, hard barriers, security gates, and security patrols, CPTED promotes high-quality and visually-pleasing solutions as the primary approach to ensuring the legitimate use of space.

CPTED can be applied without interfering with the normal use of the space. It is easy to apply and can be economical to implement, especially if it is done early at the planning and design stages of a project. CPTED principles include:

- **Natural Surveillance** - The fundamental premise of this principle is that criminals do not wish to be observed. Surveillance, or the placing of legitimate “eyes on the street,” increases the perceived risk to offenders. This can be achieved by a number of techniques. For example, the flow of activities can be channeled to put more people (observers) near a potential crime area. In addition, windows, lighting, and the removal of obstructions can be placed to improve sight lines from within buildings.
- **Natural Access Control** - Natural access control relies on physical elements to keep unauthorized persons out of a particular place if they do not have a legitimate reason for being there. On private property, properly located entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping and lighting can subtly direct both foot and vehicular traffic in ways that decrease criminal opportunities. In the public realm, nonphysical or “psychological” barriers can be used to achieve similar objectives. For example, these barriers may appear in the form of signs, paving textures, nature strips, or anything that announces the integrity and uniqueness of an area.
- **Territorial Reinforcement** - People naturally protect a territory that they feel is their own, and have a certain respect for the territory of others. Clear boundaries between public and private areas achieved by using physical elements such as fences, pavement treatment, art, signs, good maintenance and landscaping are ways to express ownership. Territorial reinforcement can be seen to work when a well-defined space, by its clear legibility, transparency, and directness, discourages potential offenders because of users’ familiarity with each other and the surroundings.
- **Maintenance & Management** - This principle is related to the neighborhood’s sense of “pride of place.” The more dilapidated an area, the more likely it is to attract unwanted activities. The maintenance and

<sup>7</sup> Source National Crime Prevention Council. (October 2003). *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Guidebook*. Singapore. [www.ncpc.gov.sg](http://www.ncpc.gov.sg).

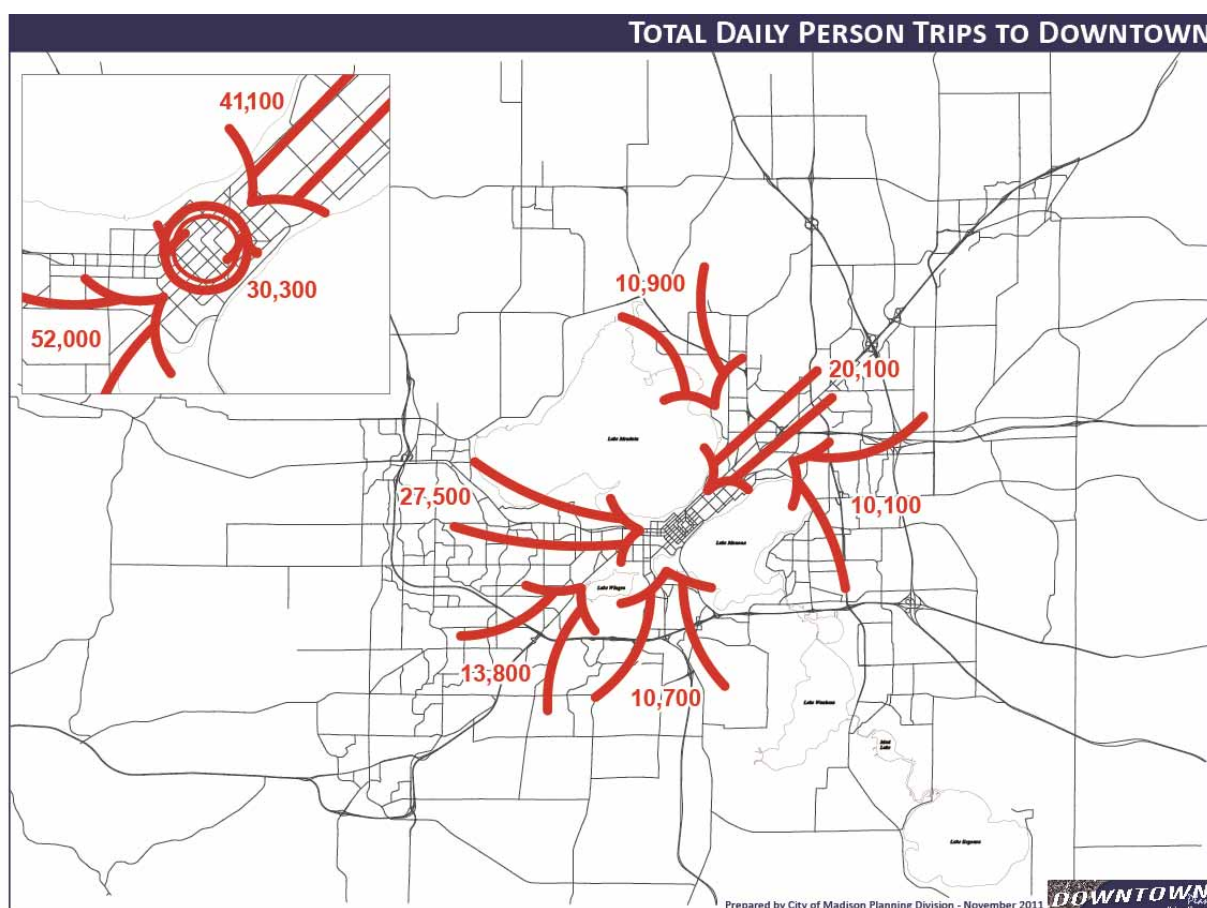
the “image” of an area can have a major impact on whether it will become targeted. This approach can improve not only the image the population has of itself and its domain, but also the projection of that image to others. Maintenance and management need to be considered at the design stage, as the location of spaces and selection of materials/finishes will impact the types of maintenance that can be sustained over time.

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## KEY 6: INCREASE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

A Downtown that is easy to get to and efficient and safe to get around in is important to attracting people and businesses. It needs to be highly accessible for all users. This plan outlines a balanced and integrated approach focused on developing multiple ways (modes) for people to get to and around Downtown.

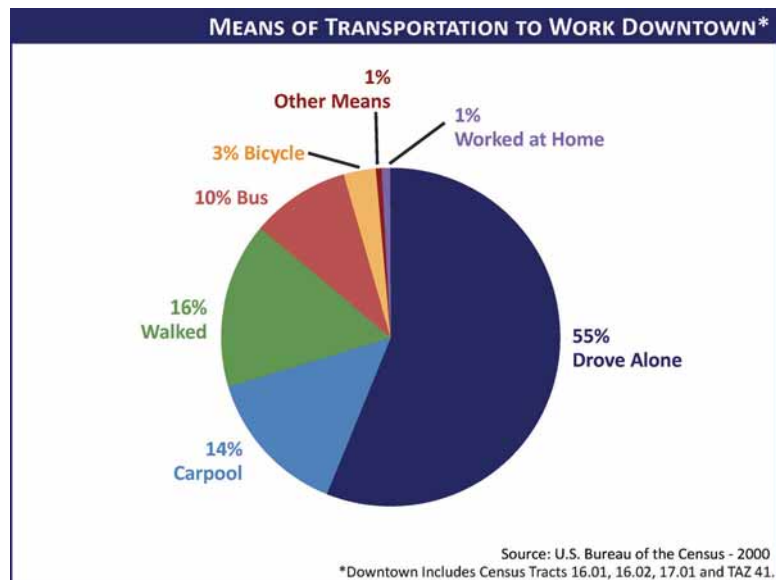
Nearly 100,000 people from outside the Downtown come to the Downtown every day (see map below). A major goal of this plan is to improve how Downtown is connected to surrounding neighborhoods, the greater community, the region, and beyond. Although a large-scale transportation vision is articulated in other adopted plans, such as the *Comprehensive Plan* and *Regional Transportation Plan*, this Downtown plan focuses on how to improve connections between outlying neighborhoods and communities and major Downtown employment, business, and activity centers. These include areas such as the Capitol Square/government employment district, State Street, the University of Wisconsin, the Capital East employment district, the West Rail Corridor employment district, and the Park Street Health Care Main Street.



As illustrated on the chart on the next page, nearly 70% of Downtown workers get to their jobs by car, with 55% driving alone and 14% carpooling. Not all trips to Downtown are made for work purposes, but this data is a good indicator of how people travel to Downtown. The narrowness of the Isthmus limits the potential to expand through-Isthmus streets, and this plan does not anticipate any significant increase in street capacity. While the existing street network can accommodate additional automobile traffic, continued Downtown growth will also require expanding and improving the transportation choices available for people to access Downtown.

This plan's recommendations for enhancing circulation to and between the diverse array of Downtown destinations focus on providing:

- Very high-quality pedestrian, bicycle and streetscape amenities;
- A compact, highly interconnected pattern of relatively short, intensively developed blocks;
- Multi-modal travel opportunities, especially for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users;
- An efficient network of arterial, collector and local streets;
- Excellent access to high frequency mass transit service;
- On-street, structured, and underground parking facilities to meet anticipated needs, and eventual redevelopment of large surface parking lots.



Planning for future land uses is an integral part of transportation planning and land use changes must be coordinated with changes to the transportation system. This plan generally recommends that the highest intensity of development and activity be located in close proximity to those areas with the most transportation options, and recommends corresponding improvements in the capacity and attractiveness of the transportation infrastructure serving Downtown businesses, residents, and visitors. The scale and intensity of planned development within the Downtown will continue to challenge the transportation system and require a significant investment to ensure that the goals for Downtown Madison can be achieved.

### Connections to Other Cities

As the economy becomes more global, it is vital that Madison be well-connected to the county, region and places beyond. An easy-to-reach city and Downtown with a well integrated inter-city transportation network will help provide connections between those economies and the many resources the Madison area has to offer. The city must offer multiple ways to get to Downtown, and provide convenient intermodal connections as part of the system once one has arrived.

Although plans to bring high speed inter-city passenger rail service to Madison with a Downtown station have been delayed, this plan recognizes the importance of a passenger rail connection as an appropriate and integral element of the plan to connect Downtown directly with Milwaukee, Chicago, Minneapolis, and beyond. This plan recommends that a railroad station be established near Monona Terrace at some point in the future, and includes recommendations for the area around the potential station site; but it does not include specific plans for that facility.

Downtown is relatively well connected to the State and Federal highway systems already, but there is potential for improving both the aesthetic qualities of these corridors and the wayfinding system to enhance the experience and sense of arrival to Downtown, and the ability to easily navigate the circulation system.

The Dane County Regional Airport, located four miles northeast of Downtown, also provides essential air transportation linkages with national and worldwide destinations. The primary connections between Downtown and the airport are by private automobile, taxi or bus. While the relative nearness of Downtown to the airport is a valuable attribute, there are significant opportunities to provide more focused, visible, and regular shuttle service (either bus- or rail-based) between them.

Enhanced inter-city bus service provides further potential to connect Downtown with other communities. Several carriers currently serve Downtown and/or the UW campus. The closing of the Badger Bus Depot has left a service void for bus passengers, who are now picked up at several curbside locations. The Downtown Plan incorporates inter-city bus service as a potential element of the two proposed intermodal transportation facilities recommended near the east and west sides of Downtown.



*High speed passenger rail station concept with the State's Department of Administration Building in the background, and John Nolen Drive in the foreground (illustration by Wisconsin Department of Transportation)*



*Inter-city bus service could be a component of a multi-modal station near the corner of W. Washington Ave. and Regent Street (corner of W. Washington Ave. and Bedford St. in foreground)*



*Passenger rail could be a component of a multi-modal station near the corner of W. Washington Ave. and Regent Street (corner of W. Washington Ave. and the Southwest Path in foreground)*

## CONNECTIONS TO OTHER CITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

***Objective 6.1:*** Establish and enhance Downtown's connections to other cities.

***Recommendation 112:*** Continue to plan for a future high speed passenger rail station in the vicinity of the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center.


***Recommendation 113:*** Incorporate within, or in close proximity to, the rail station a variety of intermodal connections such as a bicycle station, Madison Metro bus service, commuter rail, and motor vehicle parking to facilitate the first or last leg of an intercity rail journey.


***Recommendation 114:*** Plan for and develop a dedicated transit shuttle service between Downtown and the Dane County Regional Airport.

***Recommendation 115:*** Develop a comprehensive strategy for integrating inter-city bus services into the Downtown transportation system.


## TRANSIT SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS


**Objective 6.2:** *Expand and enhance public transit service options to provide flexible and efficient service within Downtown and connections to other parts of the community.* 

**Recommendation 116:** *Support the creation of a regional transit entity to provide and coordinate enhancements to transit services within the metropolitan area.* 

**Recommendation 117:** *Establish a commuter rail system and other forms of high capacity express transit to better serve Downtown.* 

**Recommendation 118:** *Preserve the following locations, identified in this Downtown Plan, for rail-based transit stations: Union South, West Washington Avenue/Kohl Center, and Monona Terrace.*

**Recommendation 119:** *Encourage higher intensity transit-oriented development near major transit station locations.* 

**Recommendation 120:** *Expand the Madison Metro bus system to incorporate regional approaches such as bus rapid transit and express bus routes tied to remote park and ride lots.* 

**Recommendation 121:** *Enhance Madison Metro bus system passenger amenities, such as installing additional bus shelters and benches, and making upgrades around the outer loop.*

**Recommendation 122:** *Utilize intelligent transportation system technology (i.e., traveler information), and other wayfinding improvements.*

**Recommendation 123:** *Develop a Downtown circulator transit system to connect major destinations within the Downtown, and to connect Downtown locations to adjacent activity and employment centers.*

## Transit Service

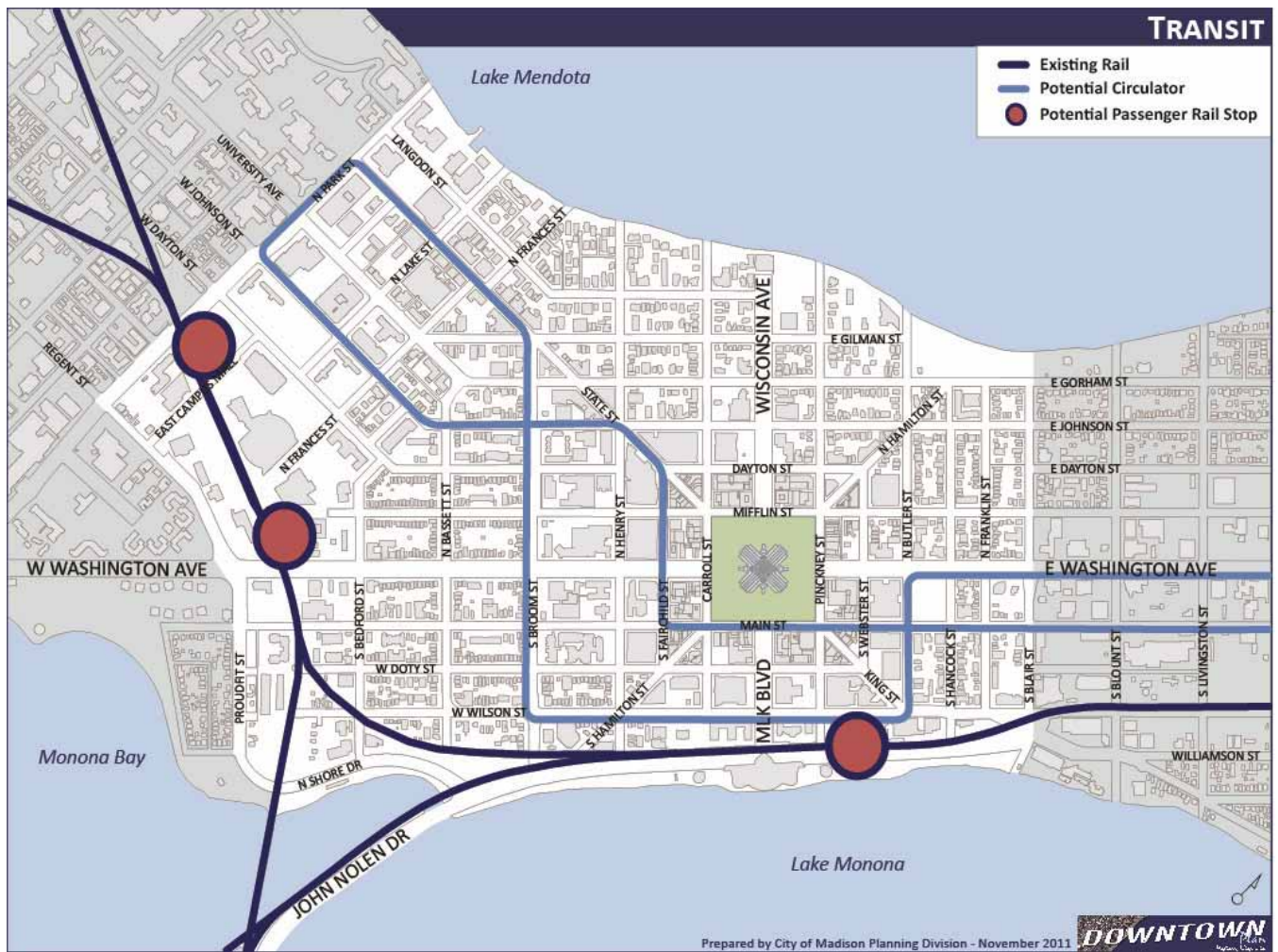
Just as the overall Downtown transportation system needs to be balanced and interconnected, so does the approach to providing Downtown transit service. This plan recommends enhancing the excellent bus service currently provided and expanding it to incorporate additional transit approaches (see the map on the next page).

Limited street capacity on the narrow isthmus, coupled with the desire for increased Downtown employment and residential growth, make it imperative that transit service to the Downtown from locations throughout the region continue to be enhanced and augmented. A Regional Transit Authority (RTA) was established in 2010, charged with planning, coordinating and implementing a regional public transit system. Since that time, the State of Wisconsin 2011-13 Biennial Budget eliminated the Dane County RTA. Efforts should be made to establish a successor regional transit entity – in order to plan and implement public transit services throughout Dane County.

In late 2010, the former Dane County RTA developed a draft Plan for Transit and obtained a significant amount of input on the Plan from members of the public, major organizations, neighborhood and business associations, elected officials and policy makers throughout the region. The regional transit service improvements contained in that draft Plan for Transit would significantly improve downtown Madison access and mobility. Based on the input provided by regional stakeholders, these types of transit improvements will likely be major components in future regional transit plans - and will likely include the following specific service improvements:

- Expanded local and express bus service in the greater Madison metropolitan area;
- New express bus service to several Dane County communities outside the Madison metropolitan area;
- New passenger rail service and bus rapid transit (BRT) service in the central corridor area of the region (including Madison's isthmus);
- Park-and-ride lots strategically located throughout the region;
- Improved service for the elderly and disabled;
- Improved shared ride taxi service in communities outside the Madison metropolitan area; and,
- Regional transit system operational improvements (including fare modernization, real-time time traveler information, smart-phone/computer technologies, transfer opportunities (to access services across various transit systems) and vehicle fleet improvements and modernization.





### Bus Transit Service

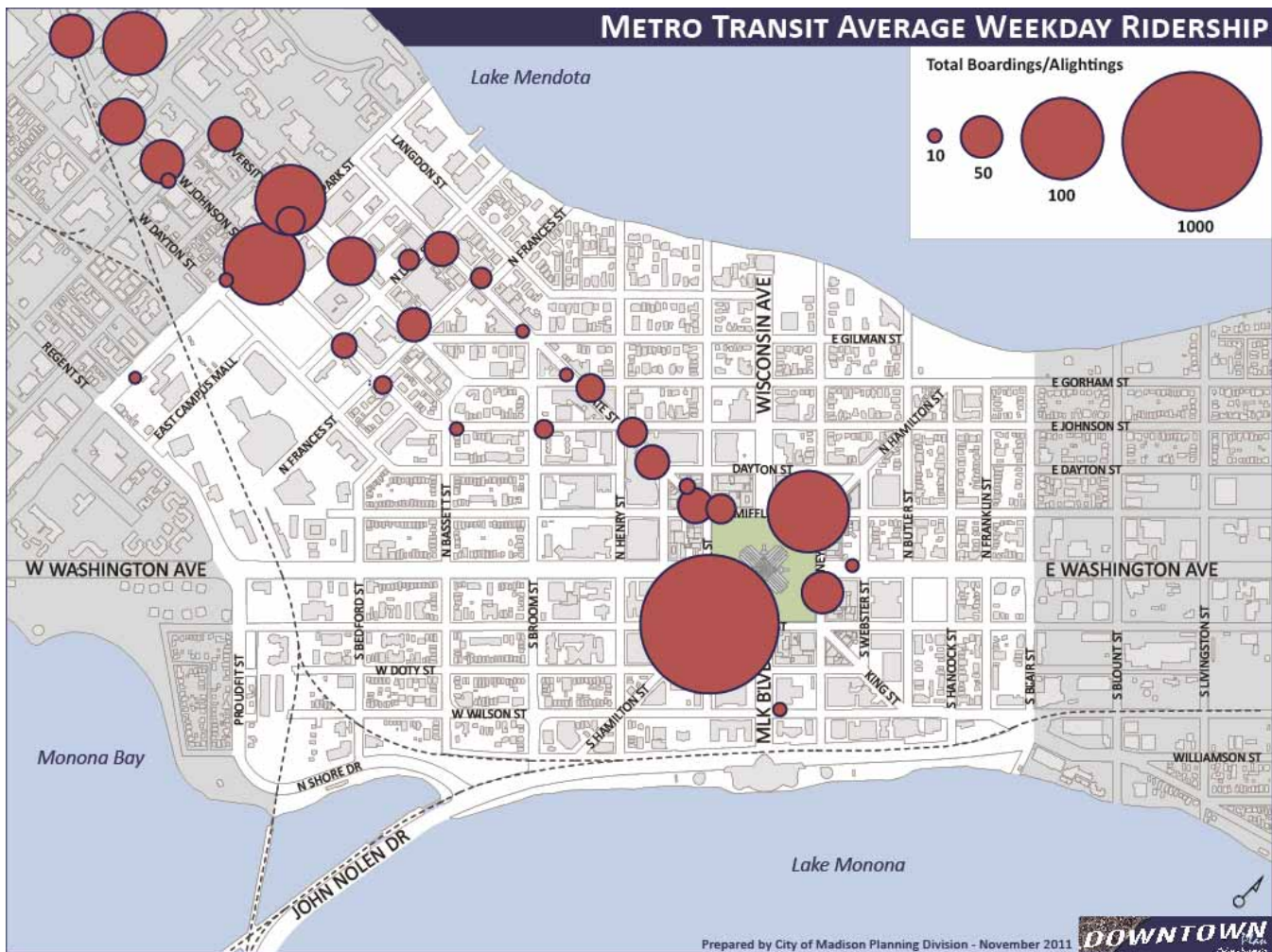
Regardless of additional transit modes that may be provided in the future, buses will continue to be an integral component of the Downtown transportation system. This plan includes several recommendations to enhance the already excellent Downtown bus service. Madison Metro Transit provides bus service to the city of Madison and some adjacent communities, and much of the system is focused through the Downtown area. Thirty-five routes operate within the geographic area of the Downtown, providing up to 7,000 trips each week. Total boardings at the bus stops in the Downtown planning area range from 50,000 to 55,000 riders each week. Downtown also serves as a major transfer location for bus riders going to different parts of the city. The map on the following page illustrates bus stop usage in the isthmus and Downtown.



A Madison Metro bus stop



A Madison Metro bus equipped with a bicycle rack



Bus routes that include the Capitol Square are frequently detoured to the outer loop to accommodate the many events that take place on the Square. These detours occur on approximately 60 days per year. Given this frequency of detours, Metro Transit and other agencies should consider them as part of the regular route structure and enhance the outer loop by providing amenities such as benches, shelters, pedestrian-level lighting, and canopy trees. The outer loop should be able to function as well as the Square. Metro should continue to improve how route deviations are communicated.

### [Commuter Rail / Bus Rapid Transit Service](#)

As was recommended in the former RTA draft Plan for Transit, a commuter passenger rail system (or a similar bus rapid transit system), should continue to be planned for and implemented. Further, the potential for future commuter rail stations at previously-identified locations in the City should be preserved and transit-oriented development (TOD) around each potential station site should be encouraged. Although much of the focus on TODs relates to how properties in close proximity to transit stops are developed, the first step is defining a transit system that will have a known route and station locations. This will allow the City to prepare the station plans and assist private developers in making investment decisions knowing that the transit infrastructure will be in place to ensure future urban mobility options. A rail- or bus rapid transit-based system provides the most assurance about the future transit service locations, since other less capital-intensive transit modes - such as buses - can change routes more easily over time.



Commuter Rail

## Circulator Transit Service

More direct, high-capacity transit service - whether rail-based or not - would enhance transportation choices to Downtown in general, and could support significantly increased Downtown employment and population in particular. But, establishing a circulator transit system to connect major destinations within the Downtown, and to connect Downtown locations to activity and employment centers adjacent to Downtown (including the University of Wisconsin campus, the Park Street Health Care Main Street, and the Capital East District), is an equally important piece of the overall long-term transportation strategy. A well-defined circulator can help ensure that when people arrive Downtown they will be able to move around easily. The route shown on the Transit Map (page 75) is illustrative and intended to show one of several possible routes to connect major Downtown destinations. The exact route would have to be carefully evaluated as part of designing an effective and efficient system. Past attempts at establishing a circulator system did not attract sufficient ridership. To be successful, the new circulator should offer frequent service throughout the day and well into the evening connecting important destinations and utilize vehicles that have a sleek, modern, and easily identifiable design. This system must be designed to meet a real transportation need and not be viewed as a novelty. Ultimately it could be a street-rail system, but initial service will most likely be a roadway vehicle.

The identification and evaluation of a specific circulator system route and the appropriate circulator vehicle should consider a larger Isthmus-wide service area and include a schedule with frequent, dependable service. Evaluation of a circulator system could be part of the recommended follow-up transportation plan. A Downtown/Isthmus circulator could be identified as a future improvement phase within the context of serving the City with commuter rail, bus rapid transit, and inter-city rail. Knitting together the diverse destinations and unique sub-areas within the Downtown and near-Downtown districts is a key element in strengthening Downtown as a business, residential, and event destination.

Multiple regional transportation corridors converge in Downtown, and this plan proposes that intermodal hubs be established near the eastern and western portions of the planning area to maximize choices for how people get around Downtown once they arrive. In addition to the potential facilities near the East Wilson Street location identified for a potential future high speed rail station, this plan proposes a new transportation hub in the vicinity of West Washington Avenue and Regent Street. Major streets and a bicycle path come together at this location and a potential commuter rail station could be located nearby in the future. Inter-city bus service could also be accommodated. A transportation hub at this location on the edge of the UW campus would be well-placed to serve students as well as Downtown residents, employees, and visitors.

## COMPLETE STREETS RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 6.3:** *Enhance the street system through a complete streets approach to accommodate the efficient movement of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.*

**Recommendation 124:** *Fund a study to review and evaluate the impacts of converting the following streets from one-way to two-way:*

- *Wilson Street – between Bassett and Broom Streets, and between Henry and Butler Streets.*
- *Broom Street – between West Doty and West Gorham Streets.*
- *Bassett Street – between West Wilson and West Gorham Streets*

**Recommendation 125:** *Improve the safety and aesthetics of the following key gateway intersections while enhancing the ability of pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the streets, and facilitating efficient traffic movement:*

- *John Nolen Drive, Williamson Street and Blair Street.*
- *John Nolen Drive and North Shore Drive.*
- *John Nolen Drive and Broom Street.*
- *West Washington Avenue and Regent Street.*

**Recommendation 126:** *Restripe West Washington Avenue between Bedford Street and Henry Street as a two lane facility with on-street parking, bike lanes, and turn lanes and intersections, without reducing the width of the terraces.*

**Recommendation 127:** *Continue to incorporate “complete streets” requirements in the design for all street reconstruction projects within the Downtown.*

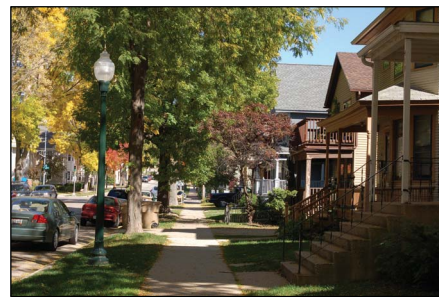
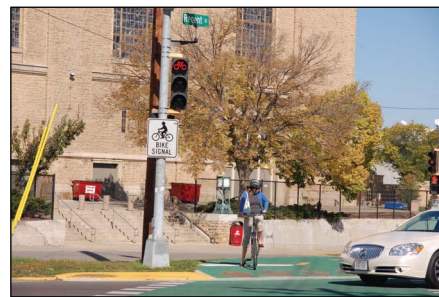
## COMPLETE STREETS

The street system provides the primary pathways within the Downtown, and its connections to the rest of the community. Although the City has been taking a comprehensive approach to street and streetscape design for years, the goal of this plan is to reinforce that all Downtown streets should be “complete streets”, designed to work on many levels for driving, biking, and walking. The National Complete Streets Coalition defines complete streets as being “designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.

Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.” This approach considers the capacity, function, efficiency, and resiliency of the Downtown street network as a whole. It will help ensure that transportation agencies design and operate the entire right-of-way to enable safe access for all users. Depending on the unique nature of the street, a complete street may have sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible transit stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and more; but all are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the street. The design of a complete street balances the needs of all users of the street and treats them with equal respect. Street rights-of-way account for a significant amount of Downtown’s civic spaces, and employing a complete streets approach can enhance the aesthetics of these spaces as well as their function.

The Downtown street system is an interconnected network of arterial and local streets (see the map on the following page). This network must continue to function efficiently to move traffic to and through the Downtown even as traffic increases. To make it easier to circulate Downtown, this plan also suggests reviewing the conversion of several one-way streets to two-way streets. Due largely to its Isthmus location, diagonal streets, and the many one-way streets, Downtown can sometimes be a challenging place to get to and through. The current street system can present challenges for people finding their way around Downtown-- particularly for the significant number of visitors and tourists who are not familiar with the city. The need to accommodate a large number of vehicles in a confined area without building additional streets or adding lanes led to the conversion of several streets to a one-way configuration many years ago. But what

worked to address traffic problems decades ago may not be the best solution for the Downtown looking into the future. Changing streets back to two-way is not without consequences, however, and the ripple effect of such changes needs to be fully understood before significant changes are made.



“Complete Streets” accommodate vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians



Planning for and developing larger, more efficient blocks of underground parking is important to support such development. Many large office developments constructed in the Downtown in the last twenty years received some level of public assistance to support structured parking. Some of these projects include some parking available to the general public.

The Madison Parking Utility operates five Downtown public parking structures with about 3,700 total spaces, and maintains approximately 1,500 parking meters on Downtown streets and surface lots. The average age of the parking structures is approximately 40 years, with several needing replacement or rehabilitation within the next 20 years (see table below). Although several parking ramps have had major structural repairs over the years, the critical age of a parking structure is the year it was originally constructed. At this time, the Parking Utility does not anticipate building additional structured parking under its current format. As shown in the table below, the Utility is facing major costs just to replace the existing structures and, except for funds reserved to replace the Government East ramp, funds are currently not available to meet the other replacement costs. Funding to replace the remaining parking facilities, let alone to build new facilities, will have to come from sources other than municipal parking bonds issued by the Parking Utility. Utilizing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funding (currently not allowed for public structures), partnering with private developments, or potentially with a Business Improvement District (as Boulder, CO does), offer some models worth exploring.

DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE SUMMARY				
Parking Facility	Stalls	Year Originally Built	Age in 2011	Estimated Replacement Cost*
Government East	600	1958	53	\$18 Million
State Street Capitol	819	1963	48	\$24.5 Million
State Street Campus	1,066	-	-	\$32 Million
Lake Street Portion	-	1964	47	-
Frances Street Portion	-	1982	29	-
Capitol Square North	613	1971	40	\$18.4 Million
Overture	625	1982	29	\$18.8 Million
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,723</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$111.7 Million</b>

\* Assumes replacement cost of \$30,000 per stall

Source: City of Madison Parking Utility


While they do contribute to the parking supply, surface parking lots are often referred to as “missing teeth” in the urban fabric and can greatly detract from the experience of a place. Fortunately, Downtown has relatively few such voids in its landscape, and surface lots are viewed more as future development opportunities than as long-term features of the Downtown environment. As opportunities present themselves, surface lots should be


## PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS

(continued)

**Recommendation 130:** Increase the utilization of Madison Parking Utility facilities by exploring ways to increase off-peak usage, including overnight parking by Downtown residents.

**Recommendation 131:** The City should hire a consultant to examine the financial sustainability of the City Parking Utility’s current approach to providing parking, the financial sustainability of this approach, and what the City’s role should be in providing parking in the future.

**Recommendation 132:** Continue giving priority and other incentives in Madison Parking Utility facilities to car pools, van pools, and hybrid vehicles. 

**Recommendation 133:** Begin planning for the future provision of recharging stations in Madison Parking Utility facilities for use by electric vehicles. 

**Recommendation 134:** Locate new and replacement parking underground as existing parking structures and surface lots are reconstructed. Where this is not possible, above ground facilities should be screened from street view with liner buildings. Upper stories of parking structures may be permitted at the street if designed to a level of interest and quality equal to a building facade. Private parking structure development should follow the same policies as public structures.

**Recommendation 135:** The City should partner with private entities whenever possible to realize the development potential of parcels occupied by existing public parking structures and surface lots. Air rights can be made available for private development.

replaced with structured or underground parking as part of mixed-use redevelopment projects, and Madison should strive to have all new parking facilities in structures or underground. Commuter parking in the back yards of residentially-zoned property has been a Downtown problem and on-going enforcement issue for decades. However as new development has occurred, especially projects with larger building footprints, a significant amount of structured parking has been added to the Downtown supply and has also removed some of the backyard commuter stalls. This issue should continue to be addressed as redevelopment projects occur with a goal of generally reducing the number of backyards dominated by commuter parking lots and returning these lots to use by residents or to more useable open space.



Government East parking ramp

## BICYCLE FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 6.5:** Improve and expand bicycle facilities through the creation and enhancement of bike routes, paths, and amenities as described in the Platinum Bicycle Committee Report and the Bicycle Transportation Plan for Madison Urban Area and Dane County. 🌿

**Recommendation 136:** Identify and make specific improvements to one-way streets, potentially including contra-flow lanes, to facilitate bicycling at the following locations:

- 100 block of East Main Street.
- 100 block of South Pinckney Street.
- 100 block of East Mifflin Street through the 100 block of West Mifflin Street.
- 100 block of West Main Street.
- 200 block of West Doty Street.
- 100 block of South Carroll Street.

**Recommendation 137:** Identify and make specific improvements for adding bike lanes as follows:

- West Washington Avenue from the Southwest Path to Fairchild Street or to Carroll Street.
- East Washington Avenue from Blair Street to Pinckney Street.
- Broom Street from John Nolen Drive to Gorham Street.
- Bassett Street from Main Street to Wilson Street.
- On streets converted from one-way to two-way, bike lanes on both sides and in both directions are desirable.

(continued on the next page)

## BICYCLE FACILITIES

One of Madison’s defining characteristics is its focus on being a bicycle-friendly city, and the Downtown has a very high concentration of bicyclists. Whether used for commuting or recreation, the extensive network of off-street paths, on-street routes, and other facilities promote bicycling as a safe, efficient, and convenient transportation alternative. The continued effort to develop bicycle connections and facilities will further enhance the integrated bicycle infrastructure. Two existing plans guide many of the City’s decisions aimed at making Madison one of the best bicycling cities in the country-- the *Platinum Bicycle Committee Report (2008)* and the *Bicycle Transportation Plan for the Madison Urban Area and Dane County (2000)*.



Biking along Lake Monona

Although east-west bicycle connections through the Downtown are heavily used, several improvements are recommended. For example, the designation of East Mifflin Street as the City’s first bicycle boulevard was recently augmented with the installation of a bike-activated signal at North Webster Street. This corridor should continue to develop with further improvements, such as accommodations through the “Philosophers’ Grove” plaza area at the intersection of State Street. North-south bicycle connections across the Downtown need to be enhanced, possibly by introducing additional bicycle boulevards. The City must also work to improve bicycle connections between the two lakes and to the lakefront paths that exist or are proposed to be built.

A new initiative currently being implemented is the B-Cycle bicycle rental program, which will locate automated kiosks throughout the Downtown and surrounding areas where bicycles can be rented and returned. This will be a great asset for Downtown residents and workers, but will be especially attractive to visitors as another way to explore Downtown. Another new initiative being pursued is incorporating a bike station as part of the Judge Doyle Square development described on page 30. Once that station is operational,



a bike station should be established in the vicinity of the Kohl Center as part of a multi-modal transportation hub.



A B-Cycle kiosk



A bike signal



A bike station

## **BICYCLE FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS**

*(continued)*

***Recommendation 138:*** Identify and make specific improvements for bicycle connections through pedestrian-only areas where bicycling is currently prohibited, as follows:

- 100 Block West Mifflin Street.
- 100 Block North Carroll Street.

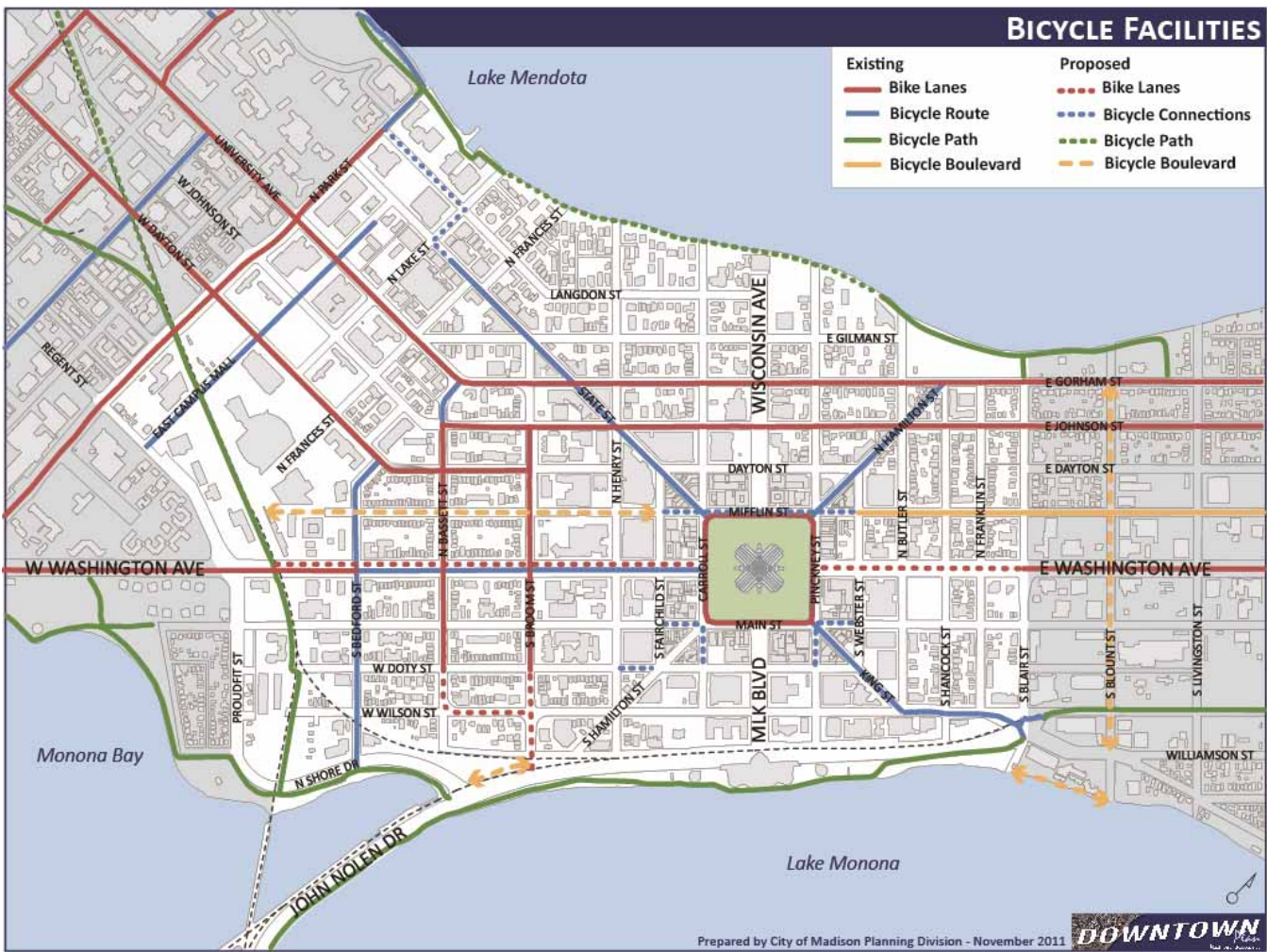
***Recommendation 139:*** Construct bike stations on the east and west sides of the Downtown as part of multi-modal transportation hubs. 🌿

***Recommendation 140:*** Provide ample short-term and long-term bicycle parking, including in conjunction with individual redevelopment projects and the construction/reconstruction of parking structures. 🌿

***Recommendation 141:*** Continue to implement enhancements to Downtown's bicycle infrastructure, such as bike boxes, wayfinding for bicyclists, and bike stoplights, including along East Main Street at the Blair Street and Webster Street intersections.

***Recommendation 142:*** Expand the B-Cycle bicycle sharing/rental program that primarily serves the isthmus.





### Pedestrian Connections

The compact Downtown development pattern makes it easy to walk to most destinations. Walking is one of the most enjoyable ways to experience all that Downtown has to offer. The planning process identified several opportunities to enhance the pedestrian experience on numerous streets and paths.

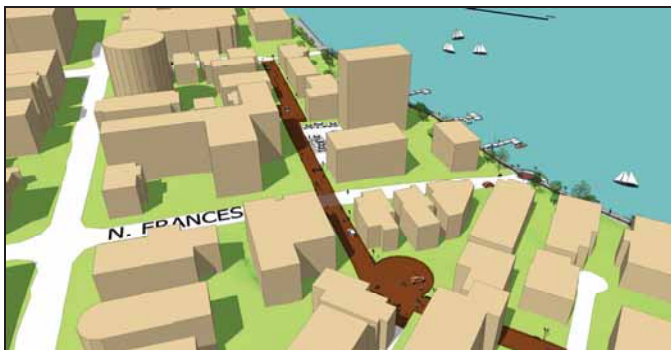
Most pedestrian facilities Downtown consist of sidewalks along streets and their associated streetscapes. A comprehensive approach to streetscape design, including the use of alternative paving materials, street crossings, ornamental streetlights and pedestrian level lighting, street trees and landscaping, and other amenities can contribute to the complete streets approach that creates places where people want to walk. This is also discussed as part of the City’s “complete streets” approach on page 78. The map on page 87 summarizes some of the key improvements recommended for the pedestrian network.

## Langdon Mid-Block Path

This plan proposes a new pedestrian walkway connecting the Langdon Street area, with its high concentration of student residents, to the UW campus. The deep blocks between Langdon Street and Lake Mendota have led to an informal but heavily-used pedestrian pathway in the middle of the block that crosses both public and private property. This Downtown Plan recommends formalizing that pedestrian connection as a public pathway with a coordinated design that will make it safer and more attractive.



Langdon Mid-Block Path Concept – plan view



Langdon Mid-Block Path Concept – bird's eye view looking west



Langdon Mid-Block Path Concept – bird's eye view looking east

## PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 6.6:** Improve pedestrian connections by creating and improving sidewalks and multi-use paths to make it easy, safe, convenient, and comfortable to walk Downtown. 🌿

**Recommendation 143:** Provide streetscape enhancements to selected Downtown streets to improve the design and aesthetics and to provide additional pedestrian amenities.

▪ Improve the outer loop in the near term focusing on aesthetic enhancements, pedestrian lighting, bump-outs, landscaping, benches, and safety improvements for pedestrians and transit users, including bus stop areas and shelters.

▪ Give priority to additional streets for aesthetic improvements:

- Wilson Street
- King Street
- Langdon Street
- Henry Street
- North and South Hamilton Streets
- Proudfit/Regent Streets

**Recommendation 144:** Continue to take a comprehensive approach to street crossing design to enhance visibility and safety for everyone, possibly including signalization, signage, and pavement materials and markings.

**Recommendation 145:** Continue the phased implementation of the Lake Mendota pedestrian-bicycle path between the Memorial Union and James Madison Park through the acquisition of additional easements as redevelopment projects occur and as opportunities present themselves. Consider the use of TIF financing.

**Recommendation 146:** Establish a formal mid-block walkway between Langdon Street and Lake Mendota through the acquisition of additional easements as redevelopment projects occur and as opportunities present themselves. Consider the use of TIF financing.

(continued on the next page)

## PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

### RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

***Recommendation 147:*** Construct sidewalks along the north side of North Shore Drive extending from John Nolen Drive to Proudfit Street, including an additional connection from this sidewalk across the railroad tracks connecting to Bassett Street.

***Recommendation 148:*** Pursue better connections across John Nolen Drive at Hamilton Street and Hancock Street as redevelopment projects within those areas occur.

***Recommendation 149:*** Enhance linkages to the East Campus Mall by adding pedestrian connections south from Regent Street to West Washington Avenue through the Triangle neighborhood to Brittingham Park.

***Recommendation 150:*** Promote safe routes to school and increase connectivity by extending the mid-block sidewalk aligned with East Dayton Street between Franklin and Webster Streets.



Langdon Mid-Block Path Concept

## Outer Loop

The outer loop is just one block off Capitol Square, and much of it is lined with parking structures and service areas supporting the buildings facing the Square. The loop accommodates high volumes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and is an often-used Capitol Square detour for Madison Metro buses. Much of the outer loop is not a particularly inviting place to walk or an attractive place to drive. As this plan was being written, a streetscape project for a portion of the outer loop was under construction that adds bumpouts at some intersections, new pedestrian lighting, landscaping, and other amenities. The remainder (approximately half) of the outer loop still needs to be reconstructed to fully implement this streetscape design. As property with frontage on the outer loop redevelops, particular attention should be paid to ensuring that buildings have active ground floor spaces, and street-facing facades with windows to allow for more “eyes on the street” and create a more inviting pedestrian environment. Parking structures should have liner buildings, at least on the ground floor.



Outer Loop - potential streetscape enhancements



## WAYFINDING RECOMMENDATIONS

***Objective 6.7:*** Improve the comprehensive wayfinding system to assist users of all transportation modes navigate to, through, and around Downtown.

***Recommendation 151:*** The City should fund, through the Capital Budget, a project to update the current wayfinding system, including intelligent transportation system elements.

***Recommendation 152:*** Improve wayfinding to and from the regional highway network, including enhanced signage directing visitors to major Downtown employers and destinations, including the University of Wisconsin.

***Recommendation 153:*** Improve pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding in the Downtown to make it easier for people to navigate the street system to get to important community assets, locations, and destinations.

***Recommendation 154:*** Evaluate parking structure signage and wayfinding to and from structures as part of an evaluation of the City's Downtown wayfinding/signage system, including the introduction of additional smart parking technology within structures to provide additional information (such as the number and location of available parking stalls) to users as they approach and circulate within structures.

## Wayfinding

Most people want to be comfortable and confident in knowing how they will get to and from their destinations. The Downtown street grid, with its large Capitol Square, diagonal streets, and many one-way streets, is often confusing for visitors. The major entrance to Downtown from the Beltline and John Nolen Drive illustrates the potential for confusion. Drivers often turn onto Broom Street to access many Downtown destinations. However, to leave Downtown, they have to travel through a residential neighborhood on Bassett and West Wilson Streets—a different route than they took to get there that often confuses visitors. The use of signage, pavement markings, distinctive street amenities and other features to help orient travelers and guide them to their desired destinations is referred to as "wayfinding." The current wayfinding system is much better than what existed several years ago, but should be revised and improved to make it as easy as possible for all modes of transportation to get around in the Downtown area.

The wayfinding system needs to address all legs of a person's journey: from the edge of the city to Downtown, to a specific area of the Downtown, to available parking options within that area or locations of bike stations, and finally to their final destinations by foot, transit, or bike. Each of these legs requires a different scale and type of wayfinding device based on the mode and the speed of travel, but all must be coordinated. The wayfinding system should cover all available modes of transportation.

Real time information about capacity and current space availability in Downtown parking ramps could also be made available not only on signage, but also on the internet and personal electronic devices, such as GPS's and smart phones.

## Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a set of actions or strategies designed to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at the most congested times of the day, and is a useful tool in a Downtown-- particularly one with Madison's constrained geography. TDM allows employers to think comprehensively about how their employees get to work and coordinate with the City on aspects that may be beneficial to their unique circumstances. TDM techniques and strategies include transportation options such as car and vanpools, public and private transit (including shuttles), and bicycling, walking, and other non-motorized travel. It can incorporate measures such as alternative work hours, program options that reduce the number of days commuters need to travel to the Downtown or shift commuting travel to non-peak period times of the day, telecommuting, preferential parking for ride sharers, subsidies for transit riders, employee transportation coordinators, on-site transit pass sales, and guaranteed ride home programs. There is no one set program, and each major employer should develop a TDM that works best for their organization and employees.


Transportation Management Associations (TMA) can be formed to coordinate TDM plans and actions for a collective of businesses and organizations who voluntarily join. Such associations could include a focus on a voluntary "smart trips" resource as a clearinghouse providing information on all modes in how to get to and around Downtown. Similar programs have been successful in Portland and Minneapolis.


## Comprehensive Transportation Study


Madison frequently studies ways to improve its transportation systems. Over the years, numerous studies and plans have been conducted that typically focus on a specific transportation mode or issue. This Downtown Plan provides recommendations that should be considered as part of a comprehensive city-wide transportation master plan that is proposed to commence in 2012. The study should also establish quantifiable targets for reaching important transportation goals.


Transportation is a critical element of this Downtown Plan and the recommended study needs to be a high priority to ensure that the Downtown can continue to meet transportation demands as the number of residents, employees, and visitors continues to increase. Now is the time to plan for future improvements and start to work on the necessary infrastructure. The longer these improvements are delayed, the more complicated, disruptive, and expensive they become to implement.

### **TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM) PLANS RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 6.8:*** Encourage the preparation of transportation demand management (TDM) plans by major employers within and adjacent to Downtown to increase employee options and promote efficient use of public and private transportation resources. 

***Recommendation 155:*** The Madison Area Transportation Planning Board's (the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the urbanized area) should continue to emphasize TDM services, including its ride-matching program. 

***Recommendation 156:*** Require TDM plans for major developments as part of the development approval process. 

***Recommendation 157:*** Consider the formation of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) within the Downtown area as a mechanism to organize individual employers and administer TDM initiatives. 

### **COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 6.9:*** Coordinate the recommendations from the transportation studies and plans recently completed and currently underway, including: Transport 2020, Madison Streetcar Study, Platinum Bicycle Committee recommendations, Final Report of the Long-Range Metro Transit Planning Ad Hoc Committee, Parking Utility Strategic Plan and Policies, Dane County Regional Transportation Plan, Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan, and Intercity Passenger Rail Plan, as well as the Comprehensive Plan.

*(continued on the next page)*

## COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

**Recommendation 158:** *Prepare a comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan and parking strategy using the following information as a basis for a scope of services for the plan:*

- *Establishing a realistic vision, expectations and strategy for how people and goods will move to, through and around the Isthmus in the future (a 25-year planning horizon is recommended).*
- *Focus on maximum interoperability between present and future modes.*
- *Introduce a fiscal policy perspective, with assessments of available funding, to balance investments across all modes.*
- *Integrate Downtown and Isthmus transportation planning recommendations with the land use recommendations included in adopted plans, including the Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Plan, Corridor Plans, Neighborhood Plans and Special Area Plans.*
- *Consider localized, neighborhood, Downtown, Isthmus, and community-wide implications in evaluating alternatives for circulation and other transportation systems.*
- *Evaluate the overall Downtown circulation system, including the effects of converting streets identified in this plan from one-way to two-way operation.*
- *Identify and evaluate a Downtown circulator system route and the appropriate mode, considering a larger Isthmus-wide service area and additional growth centers (i.e., Park Street and East Washington Avenue) and including a service schedule with frequent dependable service. The evaluation of a circulator system could be part of a follow-up Downtown/Isthmus Transportation Plan. A Downtown/Isthmus circulator could be identified as a future improvement phase within the context of serving the city with commuter rail, enhanced bus rapid transit, and intercity passenger rail.*



*Light rail*



## KEY 7: BUILD ON HISTORIC RESOURCES

Downtown is home to the majority of the city’s historic resources. These resources include dramatic structures that are iconic within the community and smaller collections of historic houses, but all contribute to the uniqueness of the Downtown. This plan embraces Downtown’s heritage by recommending a more comprehensive approach to bolstering the preservation of its historic districts and structures. This means not only addressing these buildings and districts from a reactive regulatory perspective, but being more proactive in establishing clear district-wide identities and objectives. These recommendations will create a more complete experience for Downtown’s historic areas, including properly restored buildings, distinctive streetscape amenities, and a measured amount of new development that preserves and reflects the area’s historic attributes.

The City’s *Downtown Historic Preservation Plan* (adopted in 1998) includes many recommendations that are reflected in this Plan relative to historic districts. It also identifies potential historic landmark properties. The recommendations of the *Downtown Historic Preservation Plan* were made after an extensive public process and were based on research, context, and the preservation goals of the City.

It has long been the City’s policy to protect its historic resources. Tools currently available to preserve them include both regulatory measures through the Madison Landmarks Ordinance, and financial incentives through the National Register of Historic Places designation. Of these, the Landmarks Ordinance is the one that the City relies on most heavily. This plan proposes a more proactive approach to enhance historic neighborhoods true cultural amenities that, over time, will attract new investment. Brief descriptions of the existing local and National Register Historic Districts can be found in the Key 4: Maintain Strong Neighborhoods and Districts section of this plan.



*Bashford House*

Historic preservation and the desire for increased densities and new development can and should complement each other. This plan does not suggest that every building be saved simply because of its age, but its recommendations will advance a more deliberate and complete approach to historic buildings. It will also provide a degree of predictability to the development review process, while maintaining the high quality of Downtown architectural variety. Historic buildings are often successfully integrated into creative new construction projects and many times are restored as part of a larger more comprehensive development. However, simply preserving historic buildings facades as applied architectural treatments that are really demolition and redevelopment projects is not preservation and should not be viewed as such.

The maintenance of historic properties, especially rental properties, is an ongoing issue. This problem can be magnified when buildings are occupied by students. While many owners and landlords take great pride and reinvest significantly to keep properties at a high quality for the long term, others do not. There is a perception that some landlords simply seek to make the most of their investment by spending only what is necessary to meet the minimum housing codes. Still others purchase properties speculating that they will one day be able to redevelop them and in the meantime the properties fall into disrepair, leading to a de-facto “demolition by neglect.” The exterior of all buildings within the Downtown are scheduled to be inspected every 7-8 years for compliance with the City’s housing and property maintenance ordinances. Because of the City’s policy to protect the uniqueness and special significance of landmark structures and buildings in local historic districts, these properties should be inspected more often.

## LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Historic districts provide positive local economic impacts in the district and in the City. They can contribute to the stabilization of property values, increased tax revenues, the revitalization of existing neighborhoods and small commercial districts, the expansion of tourism, and the promotion of sustainable living practices, among other benefits.



Keenan House

Madison's Landmarks Ordinance provides for the designation of properties as landmark sites, and for the designation of areas as local historic districts. As shown on the map on page 94, there are currently 85 locally-designated landmarks, 65 identified potential landmarks, and two local historic districts within the planning area. Brief descriptions of the local historic districts can be found on page 94. The Landmarks Ordinance requires approval of new buildings, exterior alterations to existing buildings, or demolitions on sites that are designated City of Madison Landmarks or are located in a local

historic district. This currently applies to approximately 20% of the nearly 1,600 parcels in the planning area, or about 11.6% of the 608 acre planning area.

The *Downtown Historic Preservation Plan* identified potential landmarks within the planning area, but few have gone through the designation process and do not have the protection offered by the Landmarks Ordinance unless they are located in a local historic district. Recommendations to establish historic districts, or to nominate buildings as local landmarks, are intended to initiate the process of doing so. Completing the nomination process and determining whether or not potential landmarks become designated will result in increased predictability for those sites. Similarly, going through the process of establishing historic districts as recommended in this plan will further clarify the future for those areas.


Regulating structures within a historic district is only one part of maintaining the district's sense of place. Other physical elements, such as streetscapes and public spaces, also need to be designed in a way that stitches the individual properties together and establishes a clear identity for the district. Special signage and historic streetlights can, for example, contribute significantly to a district's historic character.

## **LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 7.1: Preserve historic buildings and groupings of buildings that contribute to the essential character of Downtown and its neighborhoods.***

***Recommendation 159: Review, and if necessary, revise the requirements of the Mansion Hill and First Settlement Local Historic Districts to better reflect their uniqueness, protect contributing structures, and identify opportunities for compatible new development that would strengthen these historic districts for the long term.***

***Recommendation 160: Establish local Historic Districts as identified and as described in this Downtown Plan.***

***Recommendation 161: Preserve and restore landmark buildings.*** 

***Recommendation 162: Study the creation of financial incentives, such as a local property tax credit program, reduced assessment for improvements, grants, revolving loan fund, and/or small cap tax increment finance (TIF) program, for the renovation and restoration of local landmarks and properties in local historic districts, including rental properties.***

***Recommendation 163: Nominate as local landmarks those buildings identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan (1998) as potential landmarks.***

***Recommendation 164: Reinforce the identity of all Downtown historic districts with distinctive streetscape amenities, such as special streetlights, street signs, street tree selection, and terrace treatments, that helps create a clear definition that these districts are, in fact, special.***

***Recommendation 165: Ensure that owners of historic properties are well informed about the Landmarks Ordinance through direct mailings and by working with the Building Inspection Division to distribute applicable historic district and/or local landmark requirements during inspections.***

*(continued on the next page)*

**LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND LANDMARKS SUMMARY**

**Landmarks Ordinance Applicability for Downtown Parcels**

	Landmark (Not in a Local Historic District)	Local Historic District Parcels & Landmarks	Landmarks Ordinance Not Applicable	Total
Mansion Hill Local District	n/a	176	n/a	176
First Settlement Local District	n/a	84	n/a	84
Third Lake Ridge Local District	n/a	1	n/a	1
Local Landmarks	57	28	n/a	85
<b>Total Downtown Parcels</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>1,271</b>	<b>1,589</b>

Source: City of Madison Planning Division



UW Armory and Gymnasium



Gates of Heaven Synagogue



Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse



Madison Catholic Assn. Clubhouse and Madison Club



Maeder-Ellsworth Building



Belmont Hotel



Castle & Doyle Building



Suhr Building

Above photos are examples of Madison historic landmarks

**LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

**RECOMMENDATIONS** (continued)

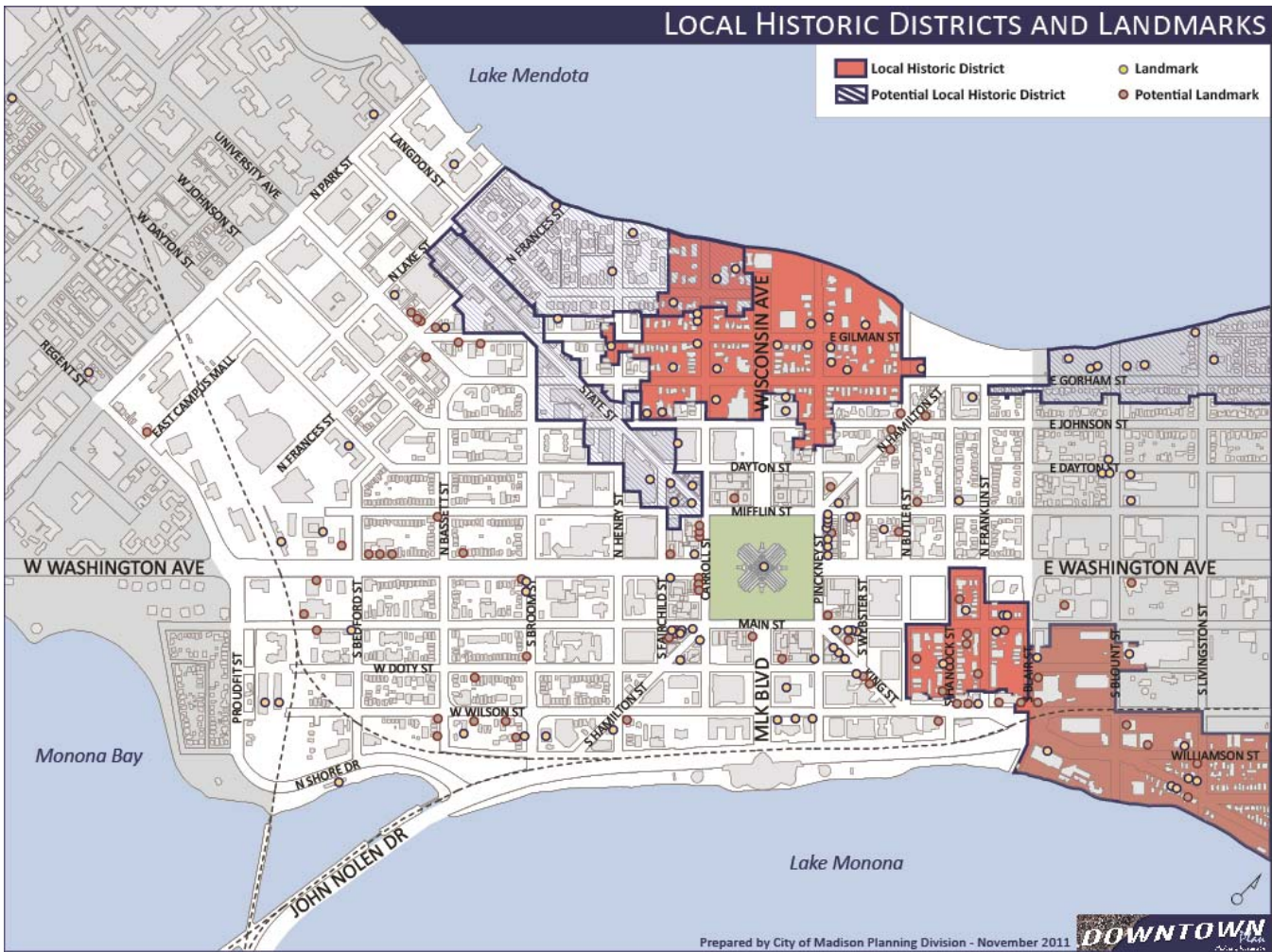
**Recommendation 166:** Partner with the Building Inspection Division to conduct more frequent systematic property and exterior building inspections to make sure that historic properties are in compliance with Landmarks Ordinance standards, including amending the City Code to allow staff to issue tickets for violations.

**Recommendation 167:** Prepare an inventory of historic properties in the State Street district and consider a local historic district designation if initiated by a representative group of property owners.

**Recommendation 168:** Prepare an inventory of historic properties in the Langdon Neighborhood and consider creating a local historic district that is generally coterminous with the Langdon Street National Register Historic District.

**Recommendation 169:** Make it a priority to designate potential landmarks in the Mansion Hill district as identified in the Downtown Preservation Plan as Madison historic landmarks.

**Recommendation 170:** Support the creation of a local historic district that is generally coterminous with the Fourth Lake Ridge National Register Historic District, a small portion of which runs along portions of East Gorham Street, and is within this neighborhood.



Prepared by City of Madison Planning Division - November 2011

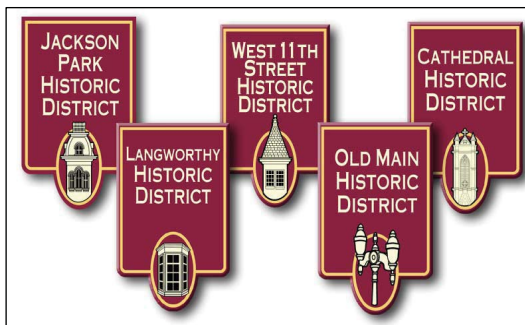


**First Settlement Historic District**

The First Settlement neighborhood just southeast of the square was the home of Madison's first residential settlement. In 1837 Eben and Rosalie Peck built a boarding house on South Butler Street to house workers who would build the first state Capitol building here. Their log cabin was the first occupied residence in Madison. As the nineteenth century progressed, more modest frame houses were built in the area, with finer brick residences sprinkled throughout. After a period of decline during the 1960s and 1970s, pioneer downtowners began to move back to the area and restore the simple houses of a bygone era. The Common Council established the area as a local historic district in 2002.

**Mansion Hill Historic District (Local Historic District and National Register District)**

Mansion Hill is the residential neighborhood north of the Square in downtown Madison. Its heart is the corner of Gilman and Pinckney Streets, where four Victorian mansions evoke an aura of yesteryear. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Mansion Hill was one of Madison's most prestigious neighborhoods, and to this day contains the greatest concentration of intact Victorian houses remaining in Madison. Many of these grand homes were built by Madison's early statesmen, businessmen, founders and entrepreneurs. The Common Council established Mansion Hill as Madison's first historic district in 1976.



Examples of historic district signage and ornamental streetlights

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

There are 40 individual properties within the Downtown planning area on the National Register of Historic Places (some of which are also local landmarks). All or a portion of five National Register historic districts with a total of 259 contributing buildings are located within the Downtown planning area. Of these, 112 buildings are not protected by the Madison Landmarks Ordinance because they are not designated landmarks or located in a local historic district. Although National Register Districts are not locally regulated, preserving the buildings within them identified as contributing buildings is a goal of this plan. Properties within National Register districts but identified as non-contributing should have more flexibility in their potential for redevelopment.



Pierce House

Tax breaks are available for many improvements to National Register properties and those within National Register historic districts. Expanding these districts to coincide with local historic districts will provide additional incentives for property owners to improve their buildings without imposing additional regulations.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 7.2:*** Provide economic incentives for the preservation of historic properties through listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

***Recommendation 171:*** Work with the State Historical Society on creating National Register Historic Districts that are coterminous with local historic district boundaries to take advantage of State tax credit incentives and reduce confusion.

***Recommendation 172:*** Consider creating a National Register Historic District designation for the State Street district if initiated by a representative group of property owners to provide incentives for property owners to improve their buildings.

***Recommendation 173:*** Consider creating a National Register Historic District in the Tobacco Warehouse district and West Rail Corridor to provide incentives for property owners to improve their buildings.

***Recommendation 174:*** Consider the expansion of the Simeon Mills National Register Historic District as identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan to provide incentives for property owners to improve their buildings.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES SUMMARY**

**National Register Historic District (NRHD) Applicability for Downtown Parcels**

	Within Local Historic District		Not Within Local Historic District		Total
	Contributing to NRHD	Non Contributing	Contributing to NRHD	Non Contributing	
Simeon Mills NRHD	0	0	7	2	9
East Wilson NRHD	1	0	12	0	13
Fourth Lake Ridge NRHD	0	0	6	0	6
Mansion Hill NRHD	130	28	27	3	188
Langdon NRHD	16	5	60	34	115

Source: City of Madison Planning Division



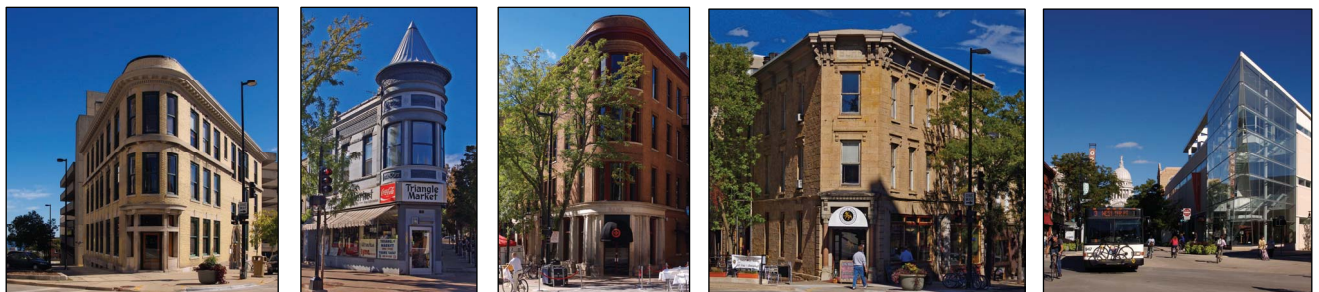
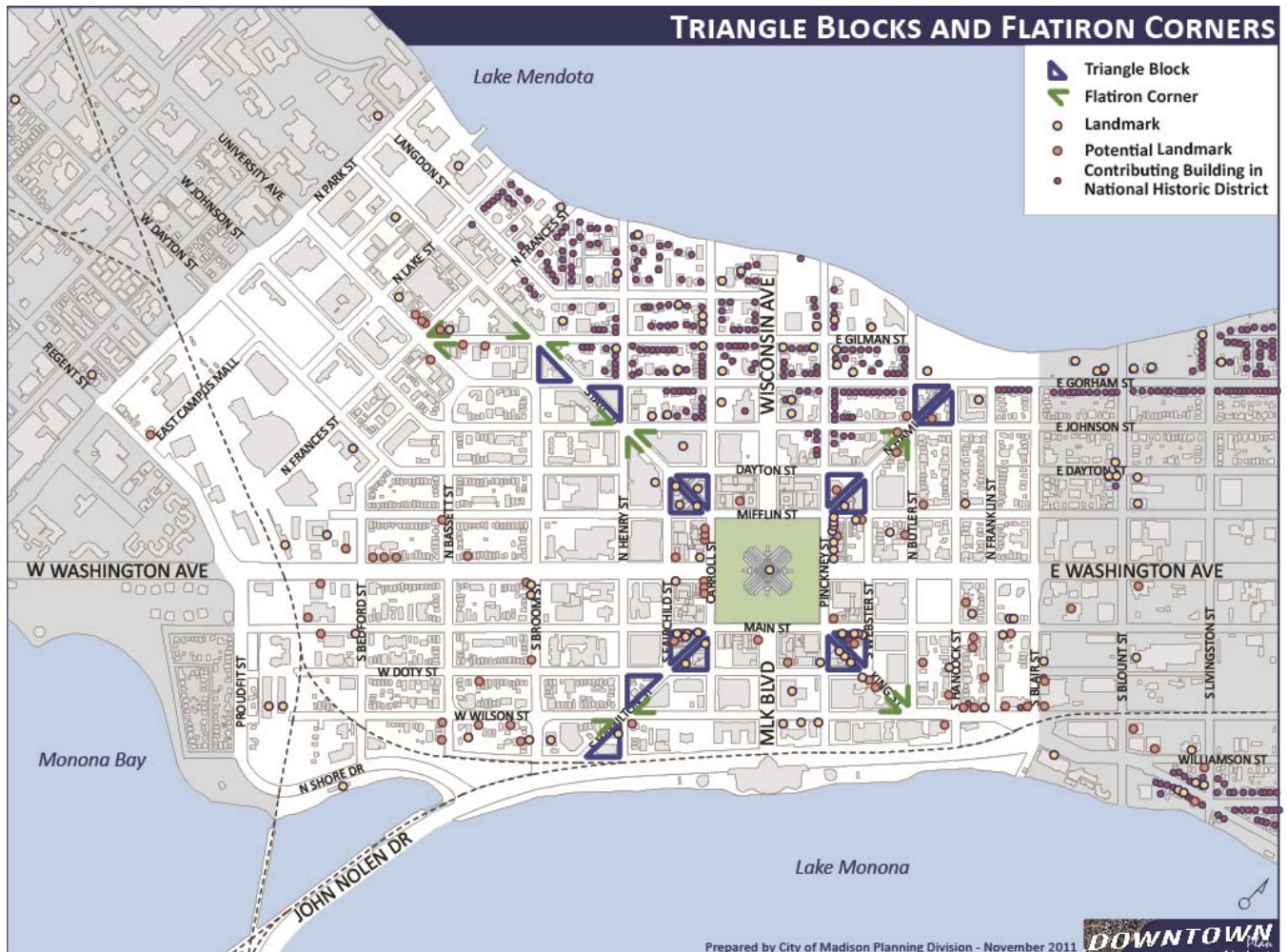
## TRIANGLE BLOCKS AND FLATIRON CORNERS

The diagonal streets that radiate out from the corners of Capitol Square-- State Street, North and South Hamilton Streets, and King Street-- create triangle-shaped blocks and flatiron (acute angle) corners at intersecting streets that provide unique building sites. The intersection of West Gilman Street and University Avenue also has flatiron parcels. Some of Downtown's most identifiable buildings are located on these sites and the flatiron building forms that characterize the sites should be preserved. The map below shows the locations of these blocks.

## TRIANGLE BLOCKS AND FLATIRON CORNERS RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 7.3:** Retain flatiron building forms to recognize their unique contribution to the character of Downtown.

**Recommendation 175:** Preserve triangle blocks and associated flatiron buildings and ensure that new development on parcels with acute angles follow that building form.



Examples of flatiron buildings, including the modern Overture Center on the far right

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## **KEY 8: EXPAND RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND ENTERTAINMENT OFFERINGS**

Downtowns should be fun, lively, colorful, usable, interactive, stimulating, animated, and flourishing. They should engage people and allow them to have new experiences each time they visit. Downtowns that do not prioritize these qualities risk becoming stagnant, with a resulting loss of population, jobs, and other investment. It is through the richness of its recreational, cultural and entertainment offerings that Downtown can truly distinguish itself from other communities and tie many of the elements of this plan together in a way that is uniquely Madison. Providing venues for people coming together to enjoy their leisure time, and the sense of place that is defined by these elements, dramatically affect people's perceptions. These are important aspects to the economic future of Downtown, as well as its desirability as a place to live.



*James Madison Park*

Parks and open space areas create destinations and gathering places for residents, workers and visitors to enjoy the outdoor environment. As more people choose to live Downtown, it is important to provide ample park and open space to support the increasing Downtown population. There is currently an inadequate amount of park land in the Downtown, and this becomes more of a problem with each new residential development increasing pressure on existing facilities. Downtown residents often trade having a yard for the balconies, porches, and other small outdoor spaces associated their Downtown residential units. Most Downtown residents also have access to other common outdoor amenities and civic spaces, such as the Memorial Union, Library Mall, the Lake Mendota pedestrian/bicycle path, State Street, and the Capitol Square. However, there is still a need for larger usable open spaces.

Public art enhances public spaces in cities all over the world, and is most successful when thoughtfully integrated into everyday life in a way that contributes to the richness of the community's identity. As described in the *Public Art Framework and Field Guide for Madison, Wisconsin* (2002), public art is made from the spaces and structures that serve and bring citizens together in the everyday life of a city: roads, bridges, parks, plazas, libraries, community centers, and water works. Public art is not only the sculpture on the bridge or in the park or in front of a building or along a road — it is the overall form of the city's landscape, structures and infrastructure. In creating public art, the interests and concerns of artists intersect those of the community. Public art in this context of "city building" is interactive and concerned with the way a city looks and how it functions. Through their engagement in shaping the city, artists help create the community's future, and a more dynamic public realm.



*Harry Dumpty*  
Artist: Brent George



*Overture Center for the Arts*

Downtown is home to a variety of cultural institutions and venues for the performing, visual, literary, and other art forms. It is also home to a variety of museums and the Central Madison Public Library. The Overture Center and the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center are prominent recent examples of major investments by the City and the community's citizens to support cultural activities. The University of Wisconsin-Madison also provides numerous galleries, museums, and performance venues. As described on page 33, Downtown is host to a significant number of arts and culture based events that attract millions of visitors each year.

## **PARKS RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Objective 8.1:*** Create additional park land and enhance existing parks.

***Recommendation 176:*** Prepare new master plans for James Madison Park and Brittingham Park to make sure they are designed and programmed to meet the needs of residents of an increasingly dense Downtown.

***Recommendation 177:*** Upgrade the open space at North Shore Drive, John Nolen Drive, and Broom Street to improve its aesthetics as a gateway into the Downtown, and to enhance its connectivity and use, including redesigning the dog park.

***Recommendation 178:*** Create pocket parks as gathering places that can become neighborhood assets at key locations throughout the Downtown.

***Recommendation 179:*** Promote the development of private and quasi-public outdoors spaces (such as plazas with landscaping and seating) and consider requiring them as part of large-scale Downtown development projects.

***Recommendation 180:*** Create strong linkages to Central Park.

***Recommendation 181:*** Develop a new park near the intersection of Bassett and West Johnson Streets to meet the needs of the underserved high-density housing at this location. 🌿

## **Parks**

Downtown has a shortage of park and open space land. Currently, the Downtown has approximately 80 square feet of park land per person<sup>8</sup> compared to approximately 1,100 square feet per person for the city as a whole-- fourteen times the amount available for Downtown residents. As densities increase, this shortage will only worsen unless new parks are established. Developing new park land is a very challenging and expensive proposition in built up areas of the city, and it will only get more difficult as time goes on. If the goal is to accommodate more people Downtown, the infrastructure, including adequate park land, must be in place to support it. Downtown will never match the park space available in outlying areas, nor should it, but having more active, urban parks supplemented by civic and private open space and better access to the lakes can help offset this disparity. The map below shows existing and proposed new parks and open spaces.



*Downtown parks need to accommodate a variety of uses*

<sup>8</sup> Figure includes those portions of James Madison Park and Brittingham Park outside of the planning area, as well as the Capitol grounds.



### New Neighborhood Park

A new City park is proposed within the general area indicated on the map above. This is the most park deficient portion of the Downtown as defined by a 1/4-mile (5-minute walking distance) from other parks, and the existing and proposed residential densities. Many properties in the immediate area have been redeveloped during the past decade with large buildings that provide little to no open space for residents. The area proposed for the new park is well located to serve the hundreds of student-oriented residential units built in the vicinity, as well as the hundreds of additional units accommodated by this Plan. The park is recommended to be approximately 1-1/2 to 2 acres in size.



*New Neighborhood Park Concept*



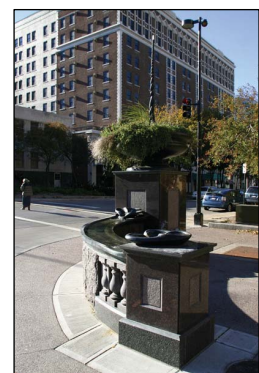
*Example of a similar neighborhood park*

The following criteria should be considered in selecting a specific site within the target area for this park: low improvement to land value ratios, underutilized properties, poor aesthetic quality of existing buildings, ease of assembly (a limited number of parcels / property-owners), opportunity to catalyze positive change, opportunity to provide supporting open space for additional higher-density development in close proximity, and opportunity to create a focal point and positive terminal views.



### Art in City Building

Public art can contribute to a place’s unique identity in significant ways, and Downtown is no exception. Downtown has the city’s highest concentration of public art works, and in more recent years there has been an emphasis on making public art an integral part of Downtown projects, as opposed to commissioning pieces to be “plopped down” in a space. One of the “art in city building” ideals is to expand the definition of public art and to raise the level of design, craftsmanship, and quality of elements found in everyday streetscapes, parks, and private development. For example, the bus shelters on State Street are the result of a design competition and are unique to that street. Likewise, the sculptural forms in the “Philosophers’ Grove” serve as seating and tabletops for users of that space. The gates at Goodman Pool are another example. This Downtown Plan encourages a wide range of public art, from major features to small, everyday objects and even transitional works that may be installed for a short time then change or be removed. This is all part of keeping Downtown interesting, exciting, and ever changing.



Fountain on Capitol Square



Philosophers' Grove at the top of State Street. Artist: Jill Sebastian



Four Lakes  
Artists: Myklebust + Sears



State Street bus shelter

## ART IN CITY BUILDING RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 8.2:** Interweave public art that evokes a sense of place and expresses Madison's cultural diversity into the fabric of Downtown through "art in city building," which focuses on integrating art into public projects.

**Recommendation 182:** Include artists on design teams for new Downtown public spaces, buildings, parks, streetscapes, and pedestrian/bicycle paths undertaken by the City.

**Recommendation 183:** Locate signature public art at key Downtown locations, such as gateways and parks.

**Recommendation 184:** Identify locations for temporary and/or event-only placement of art pieces and public performances, such as art in storefront windows, or in parks, parking garages, and other public spaces.

## Arts, Cultural and Entertainment Venues

Like most cities, many of Madison's arts and cultural facilities are located Downtown-- particularly the larger ones. Several of these facilities are located in close proximity to each other near the intersection of State Street and Capitol Square, making it very convenient to go from one venue to the next. Although facilities such as the Overture Center, State Historical Museum and Veteran's Museum, the Madison Children's Museum, and the Central Library, are large and important culture-based locations, the importance of smaller venues such as coffee houses with art galleries, or bars offering live music, should not be overlooked.

This plan seeks to balance the collection of arts and cultural facilities near the intersection of State Street and the Capitol Square with a similar cluster of University of Wisconsin cultural facilities located near the opposite end of State Street. The six-block long State Street is widely regarded as Madison's premier street. It has an engaging collection of shops, and eating and drinking establishments (many with sidewalk cafes) that provide the makings for a well connected and active cultural corridor. This is a strength that should be further developed.

## ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 8.3:** Provide a wide variety of cultural experiences for a diverse population by clustering and connecting arts, cultural, and entertainment venues and strengthen the arts, culture, and entertainment corridor that runs from the UW campus, down State Street to the Capitol Square area.

**Recommendation 185:** Concentrate cultural venues near the top of State Street/Capitol Square and designate a cultural district connecting it to similar clusters on the UW campus at the interface with the Downtown.

**Recommendation 186:** Create a branding program for the cultural district that includes marketing, education, retail, entertainment, and wayfinding.

**Recommendation 187:** Seek to locate an urban multi-purpose entertainment facility, which could include a cineplex, in the vicinity of State Street and the Capitol Square.

(continued on the next page)

**ARTS, CULTURAL AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES RECOMMENDATIONS** (continued)

**Recommendation 188:** Enhance the existing pedestrian-friendly environment that includes opportunities for outdoor cafes and places for spontaneous street performance within a well-designed streetscape.

**Recommendation 189:** Promote and support first floor retail space around Capitol Square to help link State Street and King Street as a retail, entertainment, and cultural corridor.

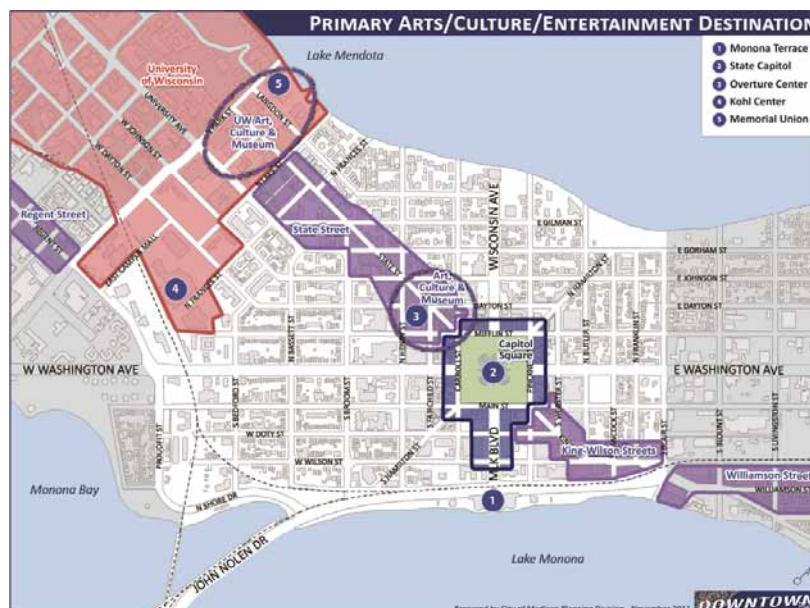
**Recommendation 190:** Develop an "Arts, Entertainment & Culture Business Plan" to encourage locally-owned retail with cultural entrepreneurs and artists investing in the Downtown arts, culture, and entertainment corridor.

**Recommendation 191:** Promote the arts, culture, and entertainment corridor by coordinating resources of the City, UW-Madison, Madison College, Downtown Madison, Inc., Downtown Business Improvement District, Greater Madison Convention and Business Bureau, Greater State Street Business Association, Chamber of Commerce, and other stakeholders.

**Recommendation 192:** Promote private/public cooperation for the use of public open spaces and facilities for a diverse array of festivals, street fairs, performances, special events and exhibits.

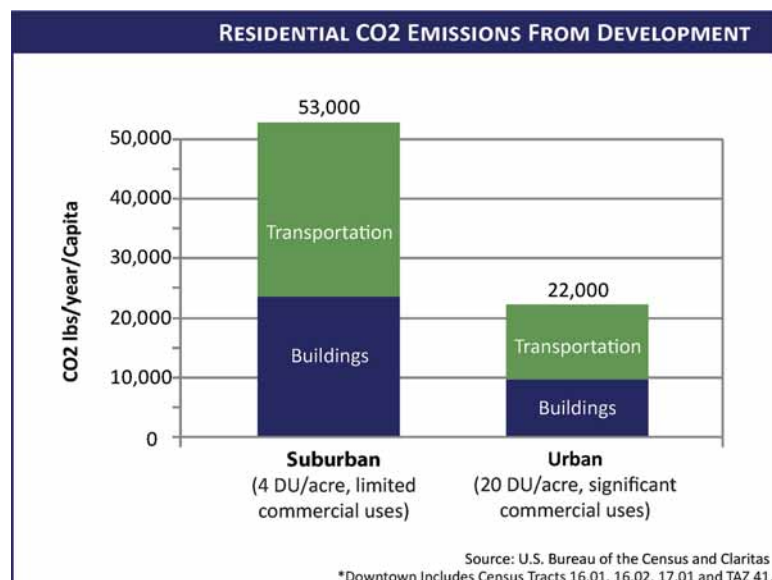


Downtown has a variety of entertainment offerings



## KEY 9: BECOME A MODEL OF SUSTAINABILITY

Madison has long been a community that places a high priority on protecting the natural environment. In recent years, there has also been an increased focus on sustainability, and no area of the community is inherently more sustainable than Downtown. The graphic below compares urban and suburban development on just one aspect of sustainability-- the production of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas.



As illustrated in the graphic on the following page, the benefits of utilizing green building and infrastructure techniques include reductions in energy use, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, water use, and solid waste. Promoting green building techniques in new construction by encouraging that new buildings be LEED certified<sup>9</sup> (or an equivalent standard) will help advance the goal of sustainability on a project-by-project basis. Incorporating similar measures in City building and infrastructure projects is another important aspect of this strategy. Park and open space enhancements provide unique opportunities to showcase the City's commitment to a more sustainable Downtown.

Building a downtown that remains successful far into the future means making sustainable choices now by integrating long-term environmental, social and economic perspectives into decision-making. It means meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Downtown can become a model of sustainability by taking a holistic view of the many systems of a city and the interconnectedness of elements such as jobs, housing, transportation, and recreation. Sustainability needs to include maximizing renewable energy, protecting the environment, sharing resources, promoting density, expanding transit choices, providing a pedestrian-friendly environment and promoting a diverse mix of activities

<sup>9</sup> LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It is an internationally-recognized green building certification system developed by the US Green Building Council.

### SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Objective 9.1:** Build upon the sustainability qualities that are inherent in a compact Downtown development and transportation systems as embodied in this Downtown Plan. 🌱

**Recommendation 193:** Reduce the City's environmental impact by expanding and funding building, landscape, and infrastructure improvements that utilize sustainable building technologies and advance the City's sustainability plans. 🌱

**Recommendation 194:** Develop municipal pilot projects in the Downtown to showcase energy efficiency, renewable energy, and green building practices. 🌱

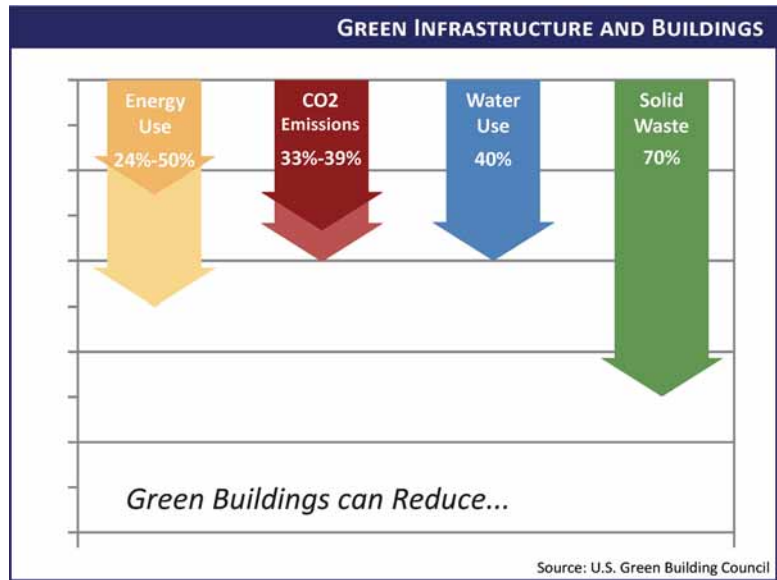
**Recommendation 195:** Promote green building design, development, and rehabilitation practices that continue to emphasize the Downtown as a model for sustainability. 🌱

**Recommendation 196:** Provide property owners and developers with education, guidance and technical support on sustainable building practices and construction techniques. 🌱

**Recommendation 197:** Showcase sustainability practices in Downtown parks through measures such as in minimizing stormwater runoff and developing wind turbines and solar power. 🌱

that are needed for cultural, economic, and intellectual exchanges. This plan emphasizes integrating these systems so that they work together for a more sustainable Downtown.

Recently, the City of Madison adopted The Natural Step as a framework for considering the environmental impacts of certain activities, and is soon to adopt *The Madison Sustainability Plan: Fostering Environmental, Economic and Social Resilience*. This Downtown Plan advances the goal of sustainability and includes recommendations that provide for a mix of uses in higher density developments, a variety and mix of housing types, preservation of existing structures, multi-modal transportation options with inter-modal connections, and easily accessible jobs, goods and services. Objectives and recommendations directly related to sustainability are noted throughout this document with a “🌱”.



*An urban solution to stormwater runoff*



*A green roof*

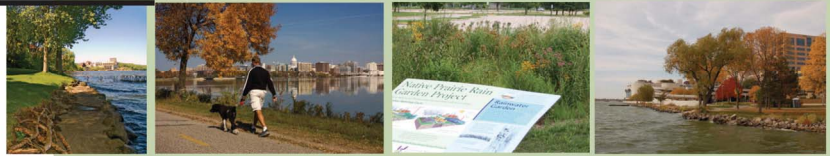


*A solar canopy*



**Key One: Celebrate the Lakes**

- Complete Path System Along Lake Mendota
- Minimize Stormwater Runoff, & Explore Ways to Increase Water Quality



**Key Two: Strengthen the Region's Economic Engine**

- Encourage High Density Infill
- Expand Employment & Retail to Support Downtown Living & Working
- Expand Neighborhood Serving Retail & Service Nodes



**Key Three: Ensure a Quality Urban Environment**

- Implement Transit Oriented Development Principles
- Protect and grow the Urban Forest



**Key Four: Maintain Strong Neighborhoods & Districts**

- Integrate Transportation Hubs
- Encourage Adaptive Reuse of Quality Commercial Buildings.
- Rehabilitate Existing Housing While Encouraging Infill & Redevelopment



**Key Five: Enhance Livability**

- Workforce & Family Supporting Housing Initiatives
- Maintain Isthmus Schools & Daycare Facilities
- Safe & Affordable Near Campus Housing



**Key Six: Increase Transportation Choices**

- Improve & Expand Public Transit, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities
- Support Regional Transit, Commuter Rail & Express Bus Routes
- Transportation Demand Management Initiatives



**Key Seven: Build on Historic Resources**

- Preserve and Rehabilitate Landmarks, Potential Landmarks & Significant Historic Structures



**Key Eight: Expand Recreational, Cultural & Entertainment Offerings**

- New Neighborhood Park
- Sustainable Park Initiatives
- Use Open Space to Connect People to Their Environment



**Key Nine: Become a Model of Sustainability**

- Capitalize on Sustainability of Downtown Living & Working
- Showcase Renewable Energy Through Pilot Projects



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## A CALL TO ACTION

This Downtown Plan presents a comprehensive vision to ensure that Downtown Madison remains a vibrant and engaging place to live, work and play for the next two decades and beyond. It builds on Downtown’s many assets and seeks to improve those aspects that need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision. Many organizations and individuals were involved in the creation of this plan, and their on-going efforts will be necessary to implement its recommendations.

This document provides a broad mix of recommendations. Some recommendations are relatively simple and can be implemented in a short time frame, while others are complex and will take several years to implement. The more complex recommendations can be major undertakings and will require project-specific follow-up planning efforts to refine the vision and develop detailed implementation plans. This section focuses on these recommendations and provides a matrix that identifies major action steps, lead agencies, and a general time frame for implementation.

The matrix below is organized by the nine keys contained in the preceding section. For each of the major recommendations in these sections, the matrix designates specific City agencies to take the lead on implementation. Most will require participation from other City agencies, but generally to a lesser extent, and some will also require the involvement of State and County agencies. “DPCED” indicates that the Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development is a lead agency.

The matrix also identifies a general time frame that indicates when a project should be implemented. Short-term suggest that the project should begin within two years after the adoption of this plan, mid-term is two-to-five years, and long-term is over five years. It should be noted that the time frame is an estimate and may vary based on funding availability, staff resources, or other circumstances.

### Key 1: Celebrate the Lakes

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<u>Recommendation 1:</u> Transform Law Park to make it a signature park for the City, including limited filling to expand the shoreline, a boathouse or enclosed activity center reflecting the Frank Lloyd Wright design, safe pedestrian connections, sustainable practices, transient boat docking, fishing pier, festival grounds, boat rentals, and similar features.	DPCED Parks Engineering	-Budget for and hire consultant to prepare detailed plans -Secure approvals for lakeshore alterations -Hold referendum -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<u>Recommendation 2:</u> Improve the streetscape and public land along John Nolen Drive from Olin-Turville Park to Blair Street to make a more formally-designed, unified, connected and active urban lakefront and approach to Downtown, including the Broom Street Gateway.	DPCED Traffic Engineering Engineering Parks	-Prepare detailed plans -Coordinate with Law Park plans -Coordinate with private initiatives -Hold referendum if required -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<u>Recommendation 3:</u> Complete a public path system along Lake Mendota connecting James Madison Park to the UW Memorial Union and Picnic Point, including enhancing connections to it through the redesign of the intersecting street ends.  (See also Recommendation 145)	DPCED Engineering Parks	-Budget for and prepare preliminary project and staging plans -Identify needed private property easements and acquisitions and officially map them -Budget for and prepare detailed plans -Hold referendum -Budget for and acquire property rights as required -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term

## Key 2: Strengthen the Region’s Economic Engine

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 12:</i> Recognize parking availability as a constraint on Downtown business development and work to address parking needs as part of a multi-modal transportation approach.	Traffic Engineering Planning Engineering Madison Metro Parking Utility	-Develop parking recommendations as part of the Comprehensive City-Wide Transportation Plan -Prioritize recommendations -Budget and schedule implementation	Short-term
<i>Recommendation 13:</i> Improve transportation linkages between the Downtown and Downtown edge employment centers generally, including vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian connections			
<i>Recommendation 14:</i> Develop a system of specific transportation improvements that will facilitate the ability to circulate rapidly and conveniently among Downtown edge destinations.			
<i>Recommendation 17:</i> Promote high quality architecture and craftsmanship for new buildings to reinforce Downtown as an engaging and attractive employment location.	DPCED	-Adopt appropriate standards in the new Zoning Code -Prepare updated Downtown Design Guidelines for use in project reviews	Short-term
<i>Recommendation 28:</i> Improve transportation accessibility and make it easier for employees, customers, suppliers and others doing business to get to and move around within the Downtown.	Traffic Engineering Planning Engineering Madison Metro Parking Utility	-Develop recommendations as part of the Comprehensive City-Wide Transportation Plan	Short-term

## Key 3: Ensure a Quality Urban Environment

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 42:</i> Provide enhanced streetscape amenities at neighborhood nodes, such as curb bump outs at intersections, wider sidewalks, benches, bike racks, enhanced terrace treatments, and more landscaping.	Planning Engineering Traffic Engineering	-Identify and prioritize locations for streetscape enhancements -Prepare detailed plans for specific improvements -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 48:</i> Enhance the special character of West Washington Avenue, including the preservation of wide terraces with mature canopy trees.	Planning Engineering Traffic Engineering	-Prepare detailed plans -Budget and schedule improvements	Long-term
<i>Recommendation 49:</i> Continue the East Washington Avenue streetscape enhancements from Blair Street to Capitol Square.	Planning Engineering Traffic Engineering	-Prepare detailed plans -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 50:</i> Enhance the Wisconsin Avenue streetscape through improvements such as ornamental area and pedestrian lighting, landscaping, and other amenities while maintaining the wide terraces.	Planning Engineering Traffic Engineering	-Prepare detailed plans -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 51:</i> Create a palette of streetscape amenities to reflect the Streetscape Typology Map for Downtown streets.  (See also Recommendation 164)	Planning Engineering Traffic Engineering Parks	-Design and select specific amenities for each street type, including pavement treatments, streetlights, street signs, median tree species and landscaping, other street furniture -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term

#### Key 4: Maintain Strong Neighborhoods and Districts

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<b>MIFFLIN</b>			
<i>Recommendation 66:</i> Develop a detailed comprehensive conservation/redevelopment implementation strategy for this area that combines rehabilitating houses, moving houses, and demolishing some structures to facilitate new development as illustrated in the concept plan, possibly including a Neighborhood Conservation District.	Planning DPCED Traffic Engineering Engineering	-Develop a detailed comprehensive strategy, including recommendations for specific implementation activities. -Prioritize implementation activities -Budget and schedule specific implementation activities -Prepare detailed plans -Budget and acquire required rights-of-way as needed -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-Term
<i>Recommendation 68:</i> Establish a pedestrian-friendly mid-block urban lane between and parallel to West Washington Avenue and West Mifflin Street in the 400 and 500 blocks to allow development in the rear yards.			
<b>BASSETT</b>			
<i>Recommendation 70:</i> Consider establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District as identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan	Planning	-Initiate Neighborhood Conservation Study process outlined in Zoning Code Request from neighborhood Determine eligibility Hold informational meeting Conduct mail survey on interest Council authorizes Neigh Cons Study Prepare Neigh Cons Study Council <u>may</u> create N C District	Long-term
<b>JAMES MADISON PARK</b>			
<i>Recommendation 89:</i> Consider establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District as identified in the <i>Downtown Historic Preservation Plan</i> .	Planning	See Recommendation 70	Long-term

#### Key 5: Enhance Livability

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 95:</i> Provide incentives for the conversion and rehabilitation of long time rental housing to owner-occupancy, targeting the James Madison Park, Mansion Hill, and Bassett Neighborhoods.	DPCED	-Identify and develop specific incentives -Implement recommended incentives	Long-term
<i>Recommendation 111:</i> Consider adopting a higher level of building and property maintenance requirements within the Downtown.	DPCED	-Identify and evaluate potential higher requirements and their likely impacts -Prepared and adopt recommended new requirements	Long-term

## Key 6: Increase Transportation Choices

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 112:</i> Continue to plan for a future high speed passenger rail station in the vicinity of the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center.	Planning DPCED Traffic Engineering Engineering	-Prepare special area plans that reserve sites for and can accommodate future rail services at a downtown location -Continue to support the Midwest High Speed Rail Initiative and development of inter-city passenger rail service to the City of Madison	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 115:</i> Develop a comprehensive strategy for integrating inter-city bus services into the Downtown transportation system.	Planning DPCED Traffic Engineering Engineering	-Develop short and long-term plans for locating an inter-city bus service hub in the downtown area -Develop recommendations for inter-city bus service to Downtown as part of the Comprehensive City-Wide Transportation Plan	Short-term
<i>Recommendation 117:</i> Establish a commuter rail system and other forms of high capacity express transit to better serve Downtown.	MPO Planning Madison Metro Traffic Engineering Engineering	-Update and refine Transport 2020 recommendations -Budget and implement priority Transport 2020 recommendations	Long-term
<i>Recommendation 118:</i> Preserve the following locations, identified in this Downtown Plan, for rail-based transit stations: Union South, West Washington Avenue/Kohl Center, and Monona Terrace.	Planning DPCED	-Develop a strategy and identify the tools needed to retain the potential for future transit use -Incorporate the potential for future transit into redevelopment plans for these areas -Include more-specific Transit Oriented Development designations for these areas in amended <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> recommendations for the Downtown	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 120:</i> Expand the Madison Metro bus system to incorporate regional approaches such as bus rapid transit and express bus routes tied to remote park and ride lots.	Madison Metro MPO	-Develop detailed expansion plans -Secure funding and budget service	Long-term
<i>Recommendation 123:</i> Develop a Downtown circulator transit system to connect major destinations within the Downtown, and to connect Downtown locations to adjacent activity and employment centers.	Madison Metro Traffic Engineering Planning	-Budget a study to evaluate potential circulator systems -Budget and prepare detailed designs for the preferred system -Secure funding and budget service	Long-term
<i>Recommendation 124:</i> Fund a study to review and evaluate the impacts of converting the following streets from one-way to two-way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wilson Street -- between Bassett and Broom Streets, and between Henry and Butler Streets.</li> <li>▪ Broom Street – between West Doty and West Gorham Streets.</li> <li>▪ Bassett Street – between West Wilson and West Gorham Streets</li> </ul>	Traffic Engineering DPCED Engineering Madison Metro	-Incorporate this evaluation and recommendations into the Comprehensive City-Wide Transportation Plan	Short-term

<p><u><i>Recommendation 125:</i></u> Improve the safety and aesthetics of the following key gateway intersections while enhancing the ability of pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the streets, and facilitating efficient traffic movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ John Nolen Drive, Williamson Street and Blair Street.</li> <li>▪ John Nolen Drive and North Shore Drive.</li> <li>▪ John Nolen Drive and Broom Street.</li> <li>▪ West Washington Avenue and Regent Street.</li> </ul>	<p>Traffic Engineering Engineering DPCED</p>	<p>-Prioritize the intersections for improvement -Prepare and evaluate alternative designs -Budget and schedule implementation of selected designs</p>	<p>Mid-term</p>
<p><u><i>Recommendation 136:</i></u> Identify and make specific improvements to one-way streets, potentially including contra-flow lanes, to facilitate bicycling at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100 block of East Main Street.</li> <li>▪ 100 block of South Pinckney Street.</li> <li>▪ 100 block of East Mifflin Street through the 100 block of West Mifflin Street.</li> <li>▪ 100 block of West Main Street.</li> <li>▪ 200 block of West Doty Street.</li> <li>▪ 100 block of South Carroll Street.</li> </ul>	<p>Traffic Engineering Engineering DPCED Madison Metro</p>	<p>-Incorporate the identification, evaluation and recommendations regarding specific improvements into the Comprehensive City-Wide Transportation Plan -Prioritize and prepare detailed plans for recommended improvements -Budget and schedule implementation of recommended improvements</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p><u><i>Recommendation 137:</i></u> Identify and make specific improvements for adding bike lanes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ West Washington Avenue from the Southwest Path to Fairchild Street or to Carroll Street.</li> <li>▪ East Washington Avenue from Blair Street to Pinckney Street.</li> <li>▪ Broom Street from John Nolen Drive to Gorham Street.</li> <li>▪ Bassett Street from Main Street to Wilson Street.</li> <li>▪ On streets converted from one-way to two-way, bike lanes on both sides and in both directions are desirable.</li> </ul>			
<p><u><i>Recommendation 138:</i></u> Identify and make specific improvements for bicycle connections through pedestrian-only areas where bicycling is currently prohibited, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100 Block West Mifflin Street.</li> <li>▪ 100 Block North Carroll Street.</li> </ul>			
<p><u><i>Recommendation 139:</i></u> Construct bike stations on the east and west sides of the Downtown as part of multi-modal transportation hubs.</p>	<p>Traffic Engineering Planning Engineering</p>	<p>-Identify and evaluate specific locations for bike stations -Prepare detailed plans for bike stations as the selected locations -Budget and schedule implementation</p>	<p>Short-term</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 143:</u> Provide streetscape enhancements to selected Downtown streets to improve the design and aesthetics and to provide additional pedestrian amenities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve the outer loop in the near term focusing on aesthetic enhancements, pedestrian lighting, bump-outs, landscaping, benches, and safety improvements for pedestrians and transit users, including bus stop areas and shelters.</li> <li>▪ Give priority to additional streets for aesthetic improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Wilson Street</li> <li>b. King Street</li> <li>c. Langdon Street</li> <li>d. Henry Street</li> <li>e. North and South Hamilton Streets</li> <li>f. Proudfit/Regent Streets</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Planning Traffic Engineering Engineering</p>	<p>-Prioritize project locations -Prepare detailed plans incorporating Street Typology recommendations for improvements --Budget and schedule implementation</p>	<p>Mid-term</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 146:</u> Establish a formal mid-block walkway between Langdon Street and Lake Mendota through the acquisition of additional easements as redevelopment projects occur and as opportunities present themselves. Consider the use of TIF financing.</p>	<p>Planning Traffic Engineering Engineering DPCED</p>	<p>-Prepare preliminary project and staging plans -Identify needed private property easements or acquisitions and officially map them -Acquire needed private property rights as part of redevelopment projects and/or purchase as required -Prepare detailed plans -Budget for and acquire property rights as required -Budget and schedule improvements</p>	<p>Mid-term</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 147:</u> Construct sidewalks along the north side of North Shore Drive extending from John Nolen Drive to Proudfit Street, including an additional connection from this sidewalk across the railroad tracks connecting to Bassett Street.</p>	<p>Traffic Engineering Engineering Planning</p>	<p>-Prepare preliminary project and staging plans -Obtain Office of the Commissioner of Railroads approval for rail crossing -Budget and schedule improvements</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 149:</u> Enhance linkages to the East Campus Mall by adding pedestrian connections south from Regent Street to West Washington Avenue through the Triangle neighborhood to Brittingham Park.</p>	<p>Planning Traffic Engineering Engineering Parks DPCED</p>	<p>-Prepare detailed plans -Identify needed private property easements or acquisitions and officially map them -Budget for and acquire property rights as required -Budget and schedule improvements</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 151:</u> The City should fund, through the Capital Budget, a project to update the current wayfinding system, including intelligent transportation system elements.</p>	<p>Planning Traffic Engineering Engineering</p>	<p>-Budget and conduct a comprehensive review and update of Madison’s wayfinding system -Prioritize, schedule and implement recommended enhancements to the wayfinding system</p>	<p>Mid-term</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 152:</u> Improve wayfinding to and from the regional highway network, including enhanced signage directing visitors to major Downtown employers and destinations, including the University of Wisconsin.</p>			
<p><u>Recommendation 153:</u> Improve pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding in the Downtown to make it easier for people to navigate the street system to get to important community assets, locations, and destinations.</p>			



<i>Recommendation 154:</i> Evaluate parking structure signage and wayfinding to and from structures as part of an evaluation of the City’s Downtown wayfinding/signage system, including the introduction of additional smart parking technology within structures to provide additional information (such as the number and location of available parking stalls) to users as they approach and circulate within structures.			
<i>Recommendation 158:</i> Prepare a comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan and parking strategy.  [Note: recommendation reworded to omit bullets]	Planning Traffic Engineering Madison Metro Engineering	-Prepare a scope of services for developing a Comprehensive City-Wide Transportation Plan using the detailed list of elements provided in the recommendation as a basis -Budget for, schedule, and hire consultants as required to prepare the Transportation Plan	Short-term

### Key 7: Build on Historic Resources

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 160:</i> Establish local Historic Districts as identified and as described in this Downtown Plan.	Planning	-Prioritize potential districts -Schedule and conduct required studies -Define historic district boundaries and recommended district design standards and guidelines -Adopt ordinance creating district	Long-term
<i>Recommendation 164:</i> Reinforce the identity of all Downtown historic districts with distinctive streetscape amenities, such as special streetlights, street signs, street tree selection, and terrace treatments, that helps create a clear definition that these districts are, in fact, special. (See also Recommendation 51)	Planning Traffic Engineering Engineering Parks	-Design and select specific amenities for each historic district -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 171:</i> Work with the State Historical Society on creating National Register Historic Districts that are coterminous with local historic district boundaries to take advantage of State tax credit incentives and reduce confusion.	Planning	-Schedule and conduct required studies -Prepare and submit nominations	Long-term

### Key 8: Expand Recreational, Cultural, and Entertainment Offerings

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 177:</i> Upgrade the open space at North Shore Drive, John Nolen Drive, and Broom Street to improve its aesthetics as a gateway into the Downtown, and to enhance its connectivity and use, including redesigning the dog park.	Planning Parks Traffic Engineering Engineering	-Prepare detailed plans -Coordinate with John Nolen and Law Park improvement plans -Budget and schedule improvements	Mid-term
<i>Recommendation 181:</i> Develop a new park near the intersection of Bassett and West Johnson Streets to meet the needs of the underserved high-density housing at this location.	Parks DPCED	-Identify and evaluate specific park site -Budget for and acquire property -Prepare detailed park plan -Budget and schedule improvements	Short-term

**Key 9: Become a Model of Sustainability**

Recommendation	Lead Agencies	Action Steps	Time Frame
<i>Recommendation 197:</i> Showcase sustainability practices in Downtown parks through measures such as in minimizing stormwater runoff and developing wind turbines and solar power.	Parks Engineering	-Incorporate into plans for new and enhanced park spaces as appropriate, including Recommendations 1,2,3,177 and 181 listed in this table.	Mid-term

## APPENDIX A: A CAPSULE HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN PLANS

Throughout the 150 year civic history of Madison, the downtown and central isthmus have been often planned and studied. James Doty's original 1836 plat laid out the building blocks of streets and squares that continue to dominate and define our city today. Nolen's 1911 Plan provided Madison with a grand vision for the future, and plans from the late twentieth century refined and re-imagined some of Madison's great public spaces, pedestrian streets and beloved traditions like the Dane County Farmers Market. Madison's willingness to reevaluate and consider new ways of planning and design has allowed the Downtown to flourish throughout its storied history. Although the number of plans involving Madison's Downtown are many, several are particularly noteworthy in providing a historical context for this Downtown Plan:

1. James Doty's Original Plat (1836)
2. John Nolen's Madison: A Model City (1911)
3. Downtown – Proposals for Central Madison (1970)
4. Downtown 2000 (1989)
5. Downtown Advisory Report (2004) / City of Madison Comprehensive Plan (2006)

Downtown's Lake Monona lakeshore also has an extensive planning history. The graphic below highlights some milestones in the development of this Downtown edge.

### James Doty's Original Plat (1836)

It was future Wisconsin Governor James Doty who first envisioned a city on this site, after passing through the area and glimpsing its potential in 1829. In April 1836, Doty purchased land on this isthmus between two lakes. That November, he lobbied the legislature of the newly created Wisconsin Territory to locate its capital city here. Doty's street plan for Madison, drafted on his way to the legislature, was inspired by Washington, D.C. This influence is apparent in Capitol Square, which radiates spoke-like streets. Madison had some advantages over the other 18 capital contenders. It boasted natural beauty, a central location and patriotic appeal: the name honored the late president James Madison and, unlike any other American town, most streets were named for signers of the Constitution. After some savvy promotion, Doty's "capital idea" became a reality.



*James Doty's Original Plat for Madison (1836)*



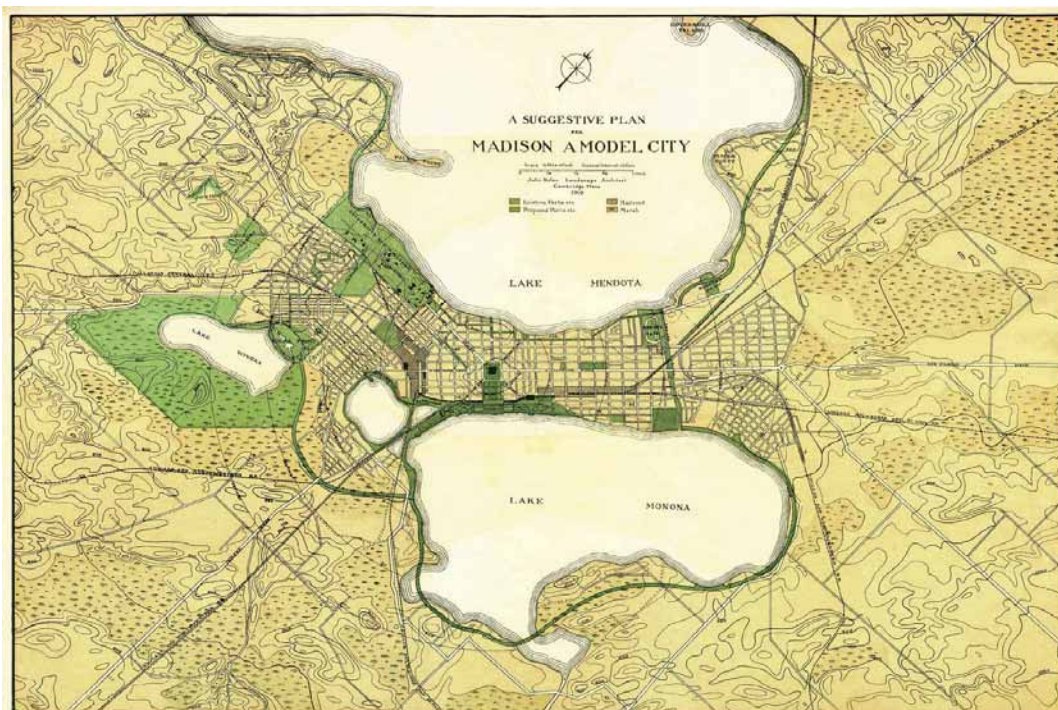
*Birdseye illustration of Madison, Wis. and its surroundings, circa 1870*

## Madison: A Model City

*Madison: A Model City* (1911) was the single most influential plan for the city since it was first laid out by James Doty seventy-five years earlier. The plan established a grand planning framework that guides the ideals and urban character of the city to this day, including:

- To pass suitable laws for the protection of the environs of the State Capitol.
- To secure for public use the most important lake frontages with a view to the formation of a Four Lake District.
- To inaugurate a plan for the redemption and use of all marsh land within or near the limits of Madison.
- To forecast the future needs of the State University and more adequately provide for them.
- To adopt a better method of locating and improving streets and making land subdivisions.
- To remove from the public streets all wires, poles and other obstructions.
- To pass a shade tree ordinance providing for the systematic public planting and maintenance of street trees.
- To take the existing parks of Madison as a nucleus and by supplementing them with small open spaces, larger parks and parkways, as already outlined, secure a well-balanced park system for the future.
- To adopt reasonable regulations for the control of all buildings so as to differentiate neighborhoods and protect real estate values.
- To consider methods of improving the housing of people of small means.

Nolen wanted to establish State Street as a major civic space that connected the University and the Capitol Square. He also established a Park System plan that connected the two lakes, and proposed major connections between large parks and recreation areas, including a connection between James Madison Park and the University, as well as along the lake Monona Shoreline.



*A map from John Nolen's Madison: A Model City*

## Downtown – Proposals for Central Madison (1970)

In the 1960s, cities across the country were using urban renewal techniques to try to revitalize urban centers that were decaying due to the enormous growth of suburban communities. The 1970 *Proposals for Central Madison* was aimed to try to maintain Downtown Madison the center of business, entertainment and culture.

Increasing traffic was seen to be choking the narrow isthmus, and the City was still considering the idea of a freeway through the isthmus. New outlying shopping centers were threatening the viability of the Downtown shopping core, and several historic buildings were being indiscriminately razed to make way for new development. Projected growth in employment numbers and increased enrollment at the University of Wisconsin was also putting pressure on an aging office and housing stock.

Several key design recommendations that came out of the 1970 plan included:

- Protect views of the Capitol
- Improve the streetscape, bury wires, improve street lighting, plant street trees
- Improve quality of development and architecture - Create an Urban Design Commission
- Protect historic buildings - Create a Landmarks Commission
- Create a State Street Pedestrian Mall and establish a Downtown Shopping District
- Expand and improve bus service and construct new public parking garages

Many of the key recommendation have positively shaped the downtown and allowed the city to have great success. Some of the City's best public spaces and events come directly from the recommendations of this planning effort and include the State Street Pedestrian Mall, Civic Center and Historical Society, Farmers Market, Concerts on the Square and the creation of the Landmarks and Urban Design Commissions.

## Downtown 2000 (1989)

The continued emergence of East and West Towne Shopping Malls as commercial centers contributed to a perception shared by many Madisonians that Downtown had no future. This plan aimed at taking those perceptions, and defined a statement of expectation and confidence for the future of Downtown. It identified a series of redevelopment opportunities that helped transform Downtown into an exciting place for people to live, spurring a great increase in Downtown's population.

Several major goals of this plan included maintaining Downtown Madison as a center of government, finance, education and culture for the state and region, as well as an emphasis on providing a variety of housing choices to attract a diverse residential population back to the central area

*Downtown 2000* reinvigorated Downtown as a vibrant place to live, work and play. Many of the redevelopment projects associated with the *Downtown 2000* Plan include:

- Monona Terrace and Convention Center
- UW Fluno Center and University Square Redevelopment
- State Street and Capitol Square Reconstruction
- Dane County Courthouse and Public Safety Building
- St. Mary's and Meriter Hospitals Redevelopment
- New condominium and apartment building with over 2,800 new housing units

*(list continued on the following page)*

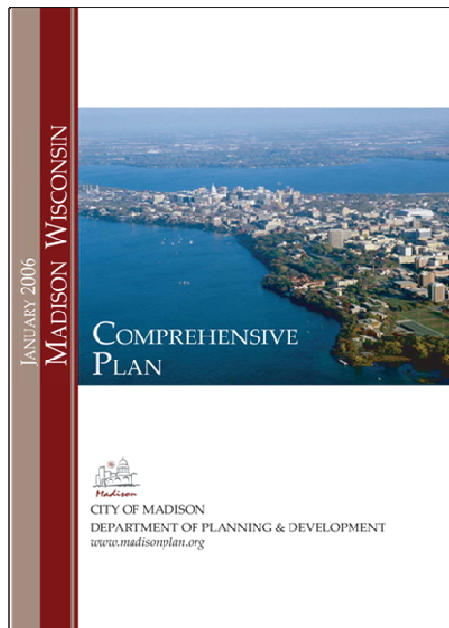
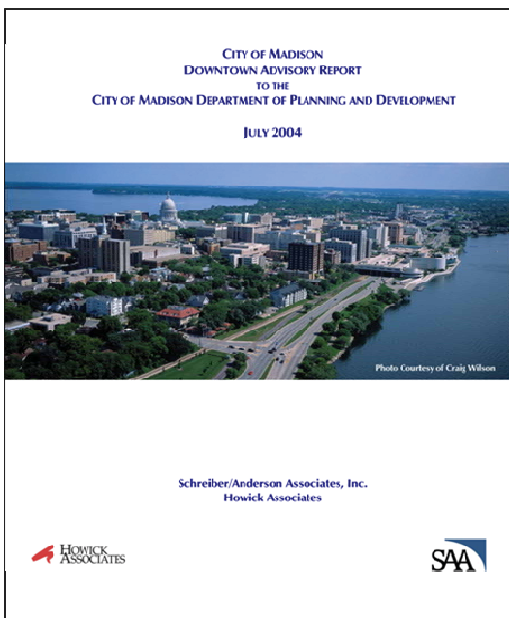
- Block 89 Redevelopment
- Overture Center
- Findorff Yards Redevelopment
- UW Kohl Center



A map from Downtown 2000

**Downtown Advisory Report (2004)**  
**City of Madison Comprehensive Plan (2006)**

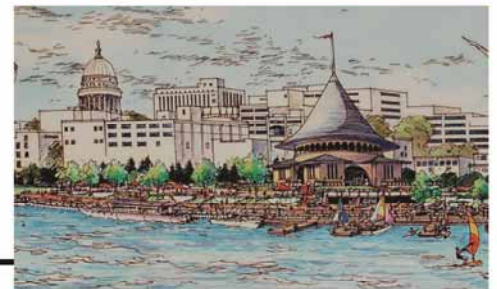
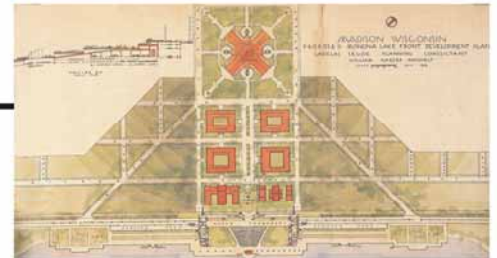
During the development of Madison’s *Comprehensive Plan*, a supporting effort was initiated to examine some of the issues and trends in Downtown. This effort is embodied in the 2004 *Downtown Advisory Report*. This report provides a summary of existing Downtown plans and studies and input received during public meetings held in the spring of 2004. It also provides a vision for the downtown and general goals and recommendations on topics including: land use, housing, transportation, economic development, civic/cultural, open space and recreation, and urban design. The *Downtown Advisory Report* served as the basis for many of the objectives and policies for the Downtown that are included in the *Comprehensive Plan*, which also includes baseline land use and building height recommendations for 10 sub-districts. However, one of the priority recommendations in the *Comprehensive Plan* is that a more detailed plan be prepared for the Downtown.



*Downtown Advisory Report and Madison’s Comprehensive Plan*

## LAW PARK AND LAKE MONONA SHORELINE PLANNING HISTORY

- 1909 John Nolen Plan sets out to strengthen the “organic relation between the new Capitol and Lake Monona.”
- 1911 John Nolen’s Madison: A Model City Plan recommends acquiring the property between the Capitol Square and Lake Monona.
- 1939 Ladislas Segoe’s Comprehensive Plan of Madison and Its Environs recommends a series of terraces that include an amphitheater, Pedestrian promenade, boat landings and a four-lane parkway with parking for 600 cars.
- 1967 Wesley Peters’s Monona Basin Project harmonizes plans for nearly three miles of lakeshore from Olin Turville Point to Williamson Street with a series of fountain jets, convention and community center and boat
- 1986 City’s Capitol Square Southeast Plan proposes a marina, parking lot and improved boat launch and pier access. City applies for DNR permit
- 1988 The Madison Common Council adopts a preliminary Law Park Redevelopment plan by the Madison Parks Commission and Aquatic Facility Study Committee. DNR indicates that habitat mitigation activity may be necessary to receive a US Army Corps of Engineering permit approval.
- 1989 Evjue Foundation announces a \$1,000,000 grant to pay for a Law Park boat house based upon Frank Lloyd Wright’s original 1893 design.
- 1990 The City is granted a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to fill approximately 4.0 acres of Lake Monona to expand Law Park with mitigation conditions that limit parking, private boat slips and include open space requirements.
- 1992 The City approves referendum on Monona Terrace Convention and Community Center project.
- 1993 The City receives an extension and alteration of the US Army Corps of Engineers Permit to build Monona Terrace Convention and Community Center upon lake bed pilings and to create a new fishing pier adjacent to the facility.
- 1996 The Parks Division (Schreiber Anderson Assoc.) prepares concept Plan for John Nolen Lakeshore parkway.



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## APPENDIX B: PLANNING PROCESS

This Downtown planning process began by building on the background, vision, objectives, policies, and recommendations contained in the 2004 *Downtown Advisory Report* and the 2006 *Comprehensive Plan*. This starting point allowed the City to begin discussion with the public based upon recently adopted goals, objectives, and policies that formed the basis for more refined strategies, projects and initiatives.

### Major Public Meetings

A series of five large format public meetings were held to coincide with the “meeting windows”, or major stages in the process.

#### Meeting One: Kickoff

Participants discussed and prioritized topics covered in the *Downtown Advisory Report* and *Madison Comprehensive Plan*, and identified recommendations they felt were missing from that report. Sustainability, parks and urban open spaces, retail uses to meet the needs of Downtown residents, growing basic sector jobs and a new/expanded central library were a few of the ideas that generated the most support from participants.



*Kick-Off meeting*

#### Meeting Two: What are the Possibilities?

In June of 2008, over 140 people attended a series of six themed public workshops were held at the Overture Center to invite people to share and discuss their big ideas for the future of Madison’s Downtown. The six themes included Downtown Working and Business, Downtown Living, Moving Around, Recreation Culture and Entertainment, Visitors and Tourists and Sense of Place. Through a series of intensive small group discussions and mapping exercises, participants discussed Downtown’s strengths and weaknesses, and generated maps that highlighted major goals, opportunities and strategies for each of the downtown planning themes.



*June 2008 workshops*

#### Meeting Three: General Plan Approaches

In November of 2008, a public meeting was held to gather public input on a series of general planning approaches for each of the theme areas as refined and adapted since the previous meetings. The results from this meeting allowed City staff to begin to hone in on a set of more specific ideas and goals that discussed with the community.



*Theme approaches*

#### Meeting Four: Areas of Emphasis

Over 150 participants attended this meeting on preliminary concepts for the Downtown Plan. Participants were engaged through a series of maps, diagrams and 3-D images that proposed ideas for major areas of emphasis within the Downtown. Participants discussed:

- Character Areas / Districts
- Key Transportation Connections & Linkages

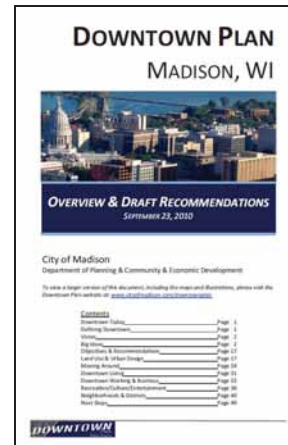


*Areas of Emphasis Map*

- Building Heights
- Areas of Emphasis / Potential Opportunities (with illustrations)

**Meeting Five: Draft Recommendations**

City staff published a booklet that outlined 10 “Big Ideas” and a complete set of draft recommendations proposed to be included in the Downtown Plan. After the initial public meeting, City Staff hosted an open house to allow the public to ask additional questions and comment on the Big Ideas and draft recommendations. Many additional comments from both the public and government agencies were gathered and discussed during subsequent months as staff began putting together the final plan.



Draft Recommendations

**Public Engagement & Communication Goals**

From the beginning, staff from the City’s Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development engaged property and business owners, residents, design and real estate professionals, students, visitors and other interested parties. Like most successful planning initiatives, communicating with and engaging the public is pivotal to creating a plan that is widely supported. City Planning Staff effort included a flexible public engagement plan that strove to:

- Include a variety of input opportunities for every audience group at every stage of the process.
- Provide opportunities for people to participate “a little” or “a lot” in the process, while assuring that one or a few individuals or interest groups do not dominate the process.
- Recognize that ongoing public involvement is essential to create an innovative & implementable plan.
- Use the *Comprehensive Plan & Downtown Advisory Report* as the basis for moving forward.
- Engage downtown organizations to increase public input opportunities & leverage City resources.
- Provide opportunities for visitors, students, & non-downtown residents (including residents of adjoining communities) to provide their perspectives on downtown.



Downtown Plan newsletters

**Key City Commissions & Committees**

City staff met with several City Commissions and Committees to receive input as the plan was being formulated, including:

- Plan Commission
- Downtown Coordinating Committee
- Urban Design Commission
- Landmarks Commission
- Transit & Parking Commission
- Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Commission
- Long Range Transportation Planning Commission



Graphics helped facilitate public discussions

- Economic Development Committee
- Board of Park Commissioners
- Madison Arts Commission
- Central Madison’s Business Improvement District Board

**Storefront Project Office**

The Downtown Plan Project Office offered a unique opportunity for Downtown residents, employees and visitors an opportunity to stop in and see the progress being made on the Downtown Plan. Located adjacent to the Overture Center and the Library, just steps off of State Street, the storefront office provided an opportunity for people to talk one-on-one about the future of Downtown with City staff in a casual atmosphere. The office served as a rotating gallery of maps, graphics and other information that had been used throughout the Planning process.

**Other Public Outreach Activities**

In addition to the five major public meetings, work sessions and Commission meetings, City Planning staff provided opportunities for engagement with interested citizens in varied ways. In addition to an interactive website and repeat broadcasts of presentations on Madison City Channel, staff regularly created a newsletter that was distributed to all interested parties.

Staff also arranged numerous small focus group meetings and one-on-one interactions with anyone who requested to meet. These focus groups and small meetings included interactions with Downtown Madison, Inc., Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc., Greater State Street Business Association, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, UW-Madison, Smart Growth Greater Madison and the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation as well as other university students, social service providers, large Downtown employers and small businesses owners.

Over the course of the planning process, City staff had over 2,250 individual contacts with the public.



*Downtown Plan office*



*Public meetings*



*Interactive mapping exercises*

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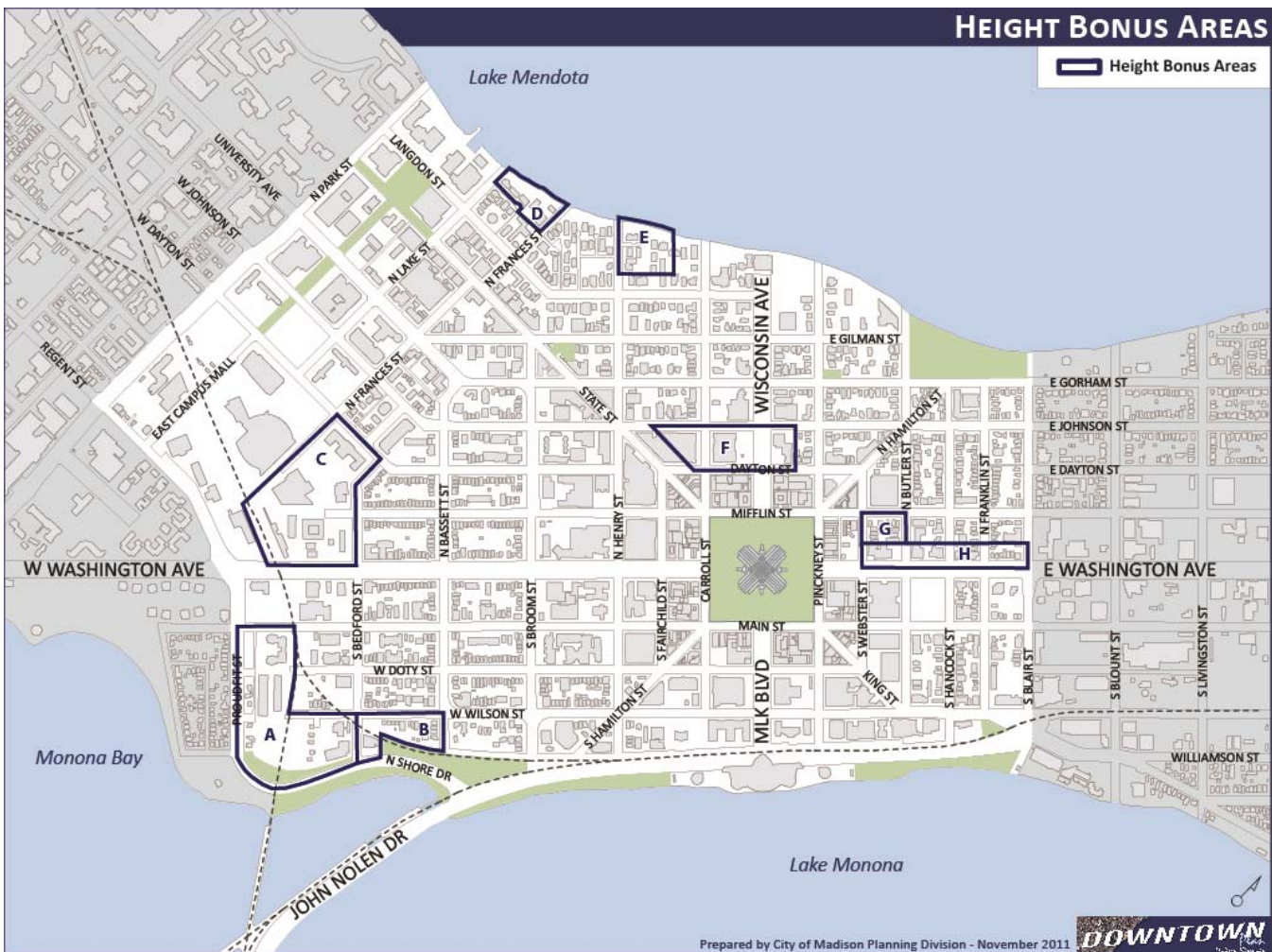
## **APPENDIX C: MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS—BONUS STORY CRITERIA**

The Maximum Building Heights Map establishes a pattern of maximum heights that is consistent with, and will help to implement, Downtown Plan objectives regarding compatibility of scale, preservation of key view corridors, and respect for the unique character of individual Downtown neighborhoods and districts. In most cases, the map sets a single maximum number of stories that can be applied consistently throughout that particular height district, although not every new building will reach that maximum since other standards and design considerations also apply.

During the planning process, several Downtown areas were identified with special characteristics that make it reasonable to allow the potential to consider buildings slightly taller than the recommended base height under certain circumstances, rather than apply an absolute fixed height throughout the district. These tend to be transition areas located between areas with different development character, recommended building height and scale; or which include existing older structures whose long-term preservation should be encouraged, but may be threatened by the potential for high-density redevelopment. To recognize and accommodate these situations, the Maximum Building Heights Map in this Downtown Plan defines eight areas where buildings may be allowed up to two additional, or bonus, stories if they meet specific criteria that reflect the unique context of the site and its surroundings, and help to advance the planning recommendations for that area.

The bonus stories are intended to provide additional design flexibility to address the unique circumstances in these areas, and to create an incentive for projects that go beyond what is otherwise required to help achieve other objectives of this plan, such as preserving landmark structures and ensuring that adjacent development is sensitive to the historic context. The bonus stories are not to be considered “by right” heights, and are only available for buildings that include specific elements or accomplish specific plan objectives, as described in the criteria below. For example, if a historic building is recommended for preservation, bonus stories may be available for a new development that incorporates the restoration of that structure; and the additional allowed height in the new building could offset the costs of restoration. In some cases, a project site might be expanded to include such a historic structure as a way to become eligible for the bonus.

The height districts where bonus stories are potentially available do not include areas within identified view corridors or local historic districts. Where bonus stories are available, it is not intended that the bonus be earned merely by complying with standards and criteria that would be required and expected in any case, such as underlying zoning regulations, good design, or sensitivity to an adjacent historic landmark. The intent is not simply to allow a taller building, but to encourage and reward buildings of truly exceptional design that respond to the specific context of their location and accomplish specific objectives defined for the area.



### SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR HEIGHT BONUS AREAS

A proposed development project would have to meet all of the criteria for that Bonus Area listed below in order to be eligible for the bonus stories.

#### Bonus Area A (Findorff Yards)

This large, irregularly-shaped block serves as a prominent edge of the Downtown, with development sites that are highly-visible from John Nolen Drive, North Shore Drive/ Proudfit Street, and across Monona Bay. Because of its visual prominence, up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects within Bonus Area B that:

- 1) Exhibit exceptionally high quality building design, including providing an interesting building “top” that enhances the near and long views cited above.

#### Bonus Area B (West Wilson)

This relatively small block also serves as a prominent edge of the Downtown, with long views from John Nolen Drive, North Shore Drive, and across Monona Bay. It contains two potential landmarks. The area is adjacent to the 4-story Bassett District on the north and east, but portions of the block slope downward from West Wilson Street toward the lake. In order to take advantage of the sloping terrain while enhancing the presentation

toward the lake and the promote the preservation of historic resources on the block, up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects within Bonus Area C that:

- 1) Exhibit exceptionally high quality building design which enhances all street frontages and presents an interesting façade towards North Shore Drive; and
- 2) Incorporate the restoration of one or more potential landmark buildings into the project to ensure their preservation.

#### Bonus Area C (West Rail)

This large, irregularly-shaped block is adjacent to districts that allow relatively tall buildings (10 and 12 stories) on two sides, and to districts that allow relatively lower buildings (5 and 6 stories) on the other two. The area also contains three designated landmarks and several potential landmarks---primarily located near the edges of the district. This provides a large central core area set well back from any of the surrounding through streets where buildings taller than the base 8 story maximum height may be appropriate if specified criteria are met. Up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects within Bonus Area A that:

- 1) Incorporate the restoration of one or more landmark or potential landmark buildings into the project to ensure their preservation; and
- 2) Ensure that the scale, massing and design of new buildings accentuate the landmark and/or potential landmark buildings within or adjacent to the project and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.

#### Bonus Areas D and E (Langdon)

These two small areas within the Langdon District are portions of large, deep blocks that slope downward towards Lake Mendota. Both areas are in a National Register Historic District and include identified contributing buildings; and any new development should enhance that character. The base height recommendation for both areas is 5 stories, but a few taller buildings might be appropriate in the middle of these blocks if set well back from the street. Within Bonus Areas D and E, up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects that:

- 1) Maintain the established front yard setbacks along the adjacent streets; and
- 2) Have a maximum height of 5 stories on any street façade; and
- 3) Provide a setback of at least 30 feet from the face of all street facades for stories above the fifth story; and
- 4) Accommodate the proposed mid-block pedestrian path where applicable; and
- 5) Incorporate one or more National Register contributing buildings on or near the building site into the development, and include their exterior restoration into the development project.

#### Bonus Area F (Institutional Blocks)

This is a transition area between the Downtown Core, with the tallest allowed buildings in the planning area, and the Mansion Hill Historic District, with a 5-story height limit. While primarily characterized by existing institutional uses, there is redevelopment potential here and taller building than are now present would be appropriate. The maximum base height for Bonus Area F is 8 stories, but up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects that:

- 1) Ensure that the scale, massing and design of new buildings are sensitive to the Historic District and provide a transition to lower heights more complementary to the District on the Johnson Street edge.

### Bonus Area G (Lamp House)

This transition area is adjacent on the west to the Downtown Core, where buildings may be built to the Capitol view height preservation limit, adjacent on the north and south to areas where 8 or 10-story building heights may be possible, and adjacent on the east to the 4-story James Madison Park Neighborhood. The Lamp House, a local landmark, sits in the center of the block. Within Bonus Area G, up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects that:

- 1) Incorporate the restoration of landmark or potential landmark buildings into the project to ensure their preservation; and
- 2) Accentuate the Lamp House and enhance its setting by ensuring that the placement, scale, massing and design of new buildings create a pleasing visual relationship with it and provide views to it from several vantage points on the adjacent streets; and
- 3) Maintain a rhythm, scale and massing of new buildings along East Mifflin Street and North Butler Street that reflects the character of the James Madison Park Neighborhood, including providing exterior entrances to individual ground floor units.

### Bonus Area H (East Washington)

This area comprises a portion of the East Washington Avenue frontage that forms the connection between the Capitol Square and the Capital Gateway Corridor that extends eastward from Blair Street. While the area only encompasses five block faces, the maximum building height in adjacent areas ranges from three stories to Capitol View, so while tall buildings are appropriate here, the area also functions as a transition area to some extent. In order to encourage taller buildings that provide continuity with the Capital Gateway Corridor and further enhance this important approach to the Downtown, up to two bonus stories may be considered for projects within Bonus Area H that:

- 1) Include building step backs above the fifth story to maintain the sense of an expansive view toward the Capitol established in the Capital Gateway Corridor.
- 2) Exhibit exceptionally high quality building design, including providing an interesting building “top.”



## APPENDIX D: BENCHMARKS

This document contains many objectives and recommendations to be accomplished over the next twenty years. Benchmarks can be useful tools in tracking and understanding changes in the Downtown over time. The table below lists a variety of measures, provides a baseline that reflects the current condition, and suggests 10-year and 20-year benchmarks. It is for tracking purposes to monitor changes in the Downtown over time. Since many influences effect changes in the Downtown (such as the real estate market), these benchmarks are not meant to gauge the success of this plan, rather to note changes that may necessitate revisiting some of its recommendations to ensure that it remains a current plan.

Measure	Baseline	10-Year Benchmark	20-Year Benchmark	Notes
Percent of Downtown's lakeshore that is publicly accessible	84.1%	92%	100%	Source: Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development
Number of Downtown workers	33,000	35,000	37,000	Source: US Bureau of the Census and Claritas. Workers in all sectors.
Assessed value of Downtown parcels (land + improvements)	\$1.88 billion	\$2.82 Billion (50% ↑ from baseline)	\$4.23 Billion (50% ↑ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: City Assessor's Office data calculated by the
Economic Impact of Monona Terrace	\$37.6 million	\$56.1 million	\$64 million	Source: Independent accounting firm, Baker Tilly. 10-year benchmark assumes a new 275-room hotel built within 1,200 feet of Monona Terrace with a total room block of 400 (currently 150). 20-year benchmark assumes no additional hotels built within the 1,200 foot radius.
Median Household income	\$21,332	\$23,466 (10% ↑ from baseline)	\$25,813 (10% ↑ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: US Bureau of the Census. Calculated by extrapolating income ranges using household counts. Does not include group quarters (dormitories, fraternities, sororities, etc.)
Percent of Downtown streets with a pavement rating of 7 or higher	57%	63% (≈ 10% ↑ from baseline)	69% (≈ 10% ↑ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: City of Madison Engineering Division. Based on WI Dept. of Transportation's PASER rating system, where 10 is a new street and 1 is a street in terrible condition.
Number of street trees per 100 feet of street	2.8	3.4	4	Source: Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development. Includes trees within medians and on the opposite side planning area boundary streets.
Number of community pride violations per year	730	550 (≈ 25% ↓ from baseline)	400 (≈ 25% ↓ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: City of Madison Building Inspection Division as reported in the Neighborhood Indicators Project. Includes violations regarding: graffiti, grass/weeds, trash/debris, property maintenance, and zoning.
Number of potential landmark properties nominated for landmark designation	0	35	65	Source: Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development. Potential landmarks identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan (1998).
Number of Downtown residents	24,009	26,400 (≈ 10% ↑ from baseline)	29,000 (≈ 10% ↑ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: US Bureau of the Census.

Measure	Baseline	10-Year Benchmark	20-Year Benchmark	Notes
Number of Downtown occupied housing units	10,457	11,700 (≈ 1,300 ↑ from baseline)	13,000 (1,300 ↑ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: US Bureau of the Census.
Percent of owner-occupied Downtown residential units	7.6%	10%	15%	Source: US Bureau of the Census. Does not include group quarters (dormitories, fraternities, sororities, etc.)
Number of Family Households	540	750	1,000	Source: US Bureau of the Census.
Number of crimes against persons per year	358	300 (≈ 15% ↓ from baseline)	250 (≈ 15% ↓ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: City of Madison Police Department as reported in the Neighborhood Indicators Project. Includes crimes such as robbery, battery, sexual assault.
Number of crimes against property (burglary/theft) per year	1,159	980 (≈ 15% ↓ from baseline)	830 (≈ 15% ↓ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: City of Madison Police Department as reported in the Neighborhood Indicators Project. Includes crimes such as residential and retail burglary, auto theft.
Number of crimes against society (drug/liquor/disturbances) per year	2,045	1,740 (≈ 15% ↓ from baseline)	1,480 (≈ 15% ↓ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: City of Madison Police Department as reported in the Neighborhood Indicators Project. Includes crimes such as disturbances, liquor violations, drug incidents.
Percent of Downtown workers who drive alone	55%	40% (≈ 25% ↓ from baseline)	30% (≈ 2% ↓ from 10-year benchmark)	Source: US Bureau of the Census
Acres of park land	44.8	47	49	Source: City Parks Division and Planning Division. Includes portions of James Madison Park and Brittingham Park that are outside of the planning area boundaries. Also includes the Capitol grounds.
Number of LEED certified buildings	2	20	50	Source: US Green Building Council. Includes LEED-NC, LEED-EB: O+M, LEED-CI, LEED-CS, LEED for Retail, LEED-HC, and LEED-SCH.

## APPENDIX E: ADOPTING RESOLUTION

[Note: This section will be completed after adoption of the plan]